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A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED ON SABBATH EVENING,

AUGUST 17, 1845,

BEFORE THE

MILLS SOCIETY OF INQUIRY,

AND THE

THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,

OF

WILLIAMS COLLEGE.

BY WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D.
OF ALBANY.

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DISCOURSE.

THE ministry of the gospel is the most important agency ever instituted among men. It originates in the benevolence and wisdom of the Highest. It is designed to carry into effect the purposes of everlasting love, by turning men from darkness unto light. It brings to its aid the mighty power of God; or rather it is itself the power of God, operating through the breath of mortals. There are innumerable agencies established by *men*, some of which are not only the result of far reaching intelligence, but are decidedly of beneficent tendency; and we venerate the great and good spirits by whom they are projected and sustained; but when compared with this *divine* agency, the greatest and the best of them are only as a rush-light to the sun. Our

world is the theatre of an *angelic* agency also: myriads of the native inhabitants of Heaven come hither on errands of good will to those who are training up to be their companions; but even they, with all their superior intelligence and bliss, have no treasure committed to them so valuable, as that which has been deposited in earthen vessels. I thank God when He sends his angels to watch around my pillow; I thank Him especially that He permits me to hope that some of these heavenly messengers may be present to take charge of my departing spirit; but I may say, without irreverence, that I owe Him a still greater debt of gratitude, for commissioning a mortal, like myself, to come and tell me that Jesus Christ has opened the door of Heaven to the repenting rebel, and that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

It might have been expected, anterior to experience, that so high and holy a work would have been assigned to a superior order of beings — beings whose purity and dignity might seem to designate them for the honour of being ambassadors of God. But infinite wisdom ordained otherwise — ordained that

the most important message ever delivered *to* man, should be delivered *by* man; that thus the power of the great Agent might be displayed and honoured through the weakness of the instrument. Nevertheless, the success of the ministry is far from being independent of its character; and in proportion to the amount of qualification which it possesses, we may expect will be, in general, the measure of good which it will accomplish. In accordance with this remark, we find that the character of the ministrations enjoyed by any community, usually furnishes a safe criterion, by which to judge of the prevailing tone of religious feeling and action — to say nothing of intellectual taste and acquirement.

If so much importance is to be attached to the particular character which the ministry may assume, it becomes a matter of vast moment to detect and shun all those influences which are unfavourable to its purity and efficacy. Much the greater part of these are comparatively remote — at least they lie as far back as the college course. We have institutions that we call appropriately "theological seminaries;" but the truth is, our

colleges partake, in no small degree, of this character; for even though theology as a science should scarcely be studied here at all, yet there are innumerable influences bearing with mighty power upon both the intellect and the heart, which are rapidly working out the character with which the sacred office is to be associated. Indeed, so decisive is the influence exerted here, that if I could know, at the close of a young man's college course, precisely what are his physical, intellectual, moral and religious habits, I should think I had the materials from which to form an estimate of the probable amount of respectability and usefulness in store for him.

In selecting a topic, young gentlemen, with which to occupy your attention this evening, I have felt at liberty to ask myself but a single question, viz: What would be most adapted to subserve your interests, as candidates for the christian ministry, and ultimately to subserve the interests of the ministry itself? With this single object in view, I have determined to direct your thoughts to SOME OF THE DANGERS TO WHICH THE MINISTRY IS EXPOSED FROM THE TEMPTATIONS INCIDENT TO COLLEGE LIFE. Both the

sacredness of the hour, and the claims of the occasion, forbid any thing like a mere literary exercise; and if the train of thought into which I shall fall, should bear a somewhat more monitory aspect than you had anticipated, I trust you will see the resonableness of it, in the ensnaring influences which surround you, and the magnitude of the interests which are in jeopardy.

I ought, however, here to premise, that there is nothing in college life, that *necessarily* operates unfavourably to the formation of a character suitable for the ministry. Nay, it admits not of question that college furnishes many important *advantages* for this; and hence we actually find that, from the faithful use of these advantages, many a young man's college course is like the shining light that grows brighter to the perfect day. Still there is here, as every where else, a mixture of evil with good; and even those arrangements which are designed to secure the greatest benefit, intellectual and moral, may be perverted, by a wayward or even indolent spirit, to purposes of unmixed evil. It is the ordinance of God that, wherever in this world of probation

man is, there temptations in some form or other should also be — temptations which, being yielded to, may prove his ruin; which, being overcome, may exalt his character and brighten his immortal crown.

Commencing with the humblest department of our nature, let me say that there is danger to the ministry from the temptations of college students to trifle with their *physical constitution*. Man, in his present state, exists as a compound being. If it is the mind that constitutes the glory of the man, elevating him far above all inferior orders of existence, still the man is not complete without the body; and though we admit that the mind will act with greatly increased vigor when it shall have left the body, and that it may even look back upon it as a sort of prison house during this infancy of its existence, yet we are to remember that it will be introduced then to a new state of being, and that material organs will not be needed where material objects are unknown. Certain it is that we have no knowledge of man, either from observation or experience, except as consisting of the material and the immaterial, bound

together by some mysterious tie, and depending in no small degree for his faculties both of enjoyment and activity, on the healthful action of these two opposite principles upon each other. We sometimes speak of the body in a manner that is perhaps scarcely consistent either with the reverence due to it as an exquisite piece of divine workmanship, or with the dependance of the mind upon it for its materials of thought, and its power of successful exertion. I would not venture to speak of the body as a worthless thing, in any circumstances in which we can contemplate it — no, not while it is undergoing the loathsome transition from flesh to dust; for even amidst the horrours of that process, I recognize a seed that shall vegetate, and bloom, and ripen into a harvest of incorruption and immortality.

Now if the mind and body thus reciprocally act upon each other, if the corporeal supplies the organs by which the spiritual performs its appropriate work, then it becomes a matter of great moment that the bodily health should be preserved — of just as great moment as it is that the individual should grow in knowl-

edge and usefulness, and thus fulfil the legitimate end of his existence. And how is this object to be accomplished? Are not diseases God's ministers, that go and come at his bidding; and is not even the highest medical skill often overwhelmed in the conflict with them? Be it so — still it remains true that God has constituted each individual, in a great measure, the guardian of his own health: He has revealed to him the mysteries of his constitution, the laws on which its healthful action depends, so far as is necessary to enable him to watch over it — in short, He has, in respect to the body as well as the soul, set life and death before him, and commanded him to choose life. If he obey the voice of God thus speaking to him through the arrangements of his physical nature, he has a right to expect the blessing of health — if he disobey, infirmity and disease will inevitably wait upon his footsteps. I do not say that there are no exceptions to this order of things; and of course, as man in his present state is essentially mortal, the time must come when no degree of care or effort can any longer keep up the earthly tabernacle:

but during the period which Heaven has allotted to human existence, the amount of health that he enjoys, the length of days that he attains, depends, under God, greatly upon himself. It is because men violate those laws on which God has suspended the health of the body, that the world has so much the aspect of a hospital; and not a small part of the invalids who are either shut up in their dwellings altogether, or only occasionally come into the street, leaning upon a staff, — if they would inquire wherefore it is that they are thus taken out of the walks of active usefulness, and perhaps doomed to an indefinite course of suffering, — could meet no answer more satisfactory, than that they are reaping the reward of their own neglect and folly.

If we look into the ranks of the christian ministry, we shall find this painful result of which I have spoken, realized, to as great an extent, (and I fear the truth would require me to say more,) as in any other profession. Who does not know how frequently it has occurred that young men of high promise, have been obliged, from the apprehension of incipient disease, to relinquish their labours in the

ministry almost as soon as they commenced them; to say nothing of the fact that many, before they had become familiar with the pulpit, have been called to make their home in the sepulchre? Who needs be told how many of us have found it necessary temporarily to leave our charges, — possibly to leave them exposed to the inroads of errour or fanaticism, — and to sojourn in foreign lands, for the sake of repairing an injured constitution? Has it not come to pass that there are many great minds in the ministry, who accomplish little for want of physical vigour — some whose whole life is little better than a lingering course of self nursing — who may indeed be retained by their charges, as a matter of compassion, but whose labours are only an apology for the legitimate discharge of ministerial duty? I know that cases like these may occur, and often do occur, in the providence of God, where there has been no culpable delinquency on the part of the individuals concerned; but it cannot be questioned that a large proportion of them have their origin in the neglect of those laws to which God has subjected our physical constitution — neglect

which either had its beginning, or became sadly confirmed, during the college course. Here — perhaps in excessive application — perhaps in the neglect of exercise — perhaps in irregular or imprudent habits of rest or diet, was laid the foundation of diseases which are now in the process of being developed, at the expense of the most promising hopes of min isterial usefulness. God's retributive agency is to be acknowledged in this result. The minister mourns, the church mourns; but where, alas, is the remedy?

Need I say, then, to you, young gentlemen, who have the ministry in view, the whole church has an interest, nay the Head of the church has an interest, even in the physical habits which you are here forming. To Christ and the church you have professed to consecrate yourselves; and in the act of consecration was included the promise that you would labour, to the extent of your ability, in the cause of truth and righteousness. But how will you come up to the spirit of this engagement, if you voluntarily, rashly, diminish your ability to labour, by the premature sacrifice of your health? Say not that you *must*

expose your health in order to maintain your scholarship. You would have no right to aspire to any degree of scholarship that should require such a sacrifice; but the truth is, a due attention to all those habits on which your health depends, is not only consistent with, but conducive to, the highest intellectual improvement; — for the mind will not continue to act with vigour, unless a healthful tone of the body be preserved. *Sana mens in sano corpore.* If, then, you would meet the wishes of your friends who are interested in your future prosperity; if you would answer the reasonable expectations of the church, which hopes ere long to rejoice in your light; if you would be saved from the pain and mortification of being marked as prematurely broken down ministers; nay, if you would secure the greatest amount of intellectual qualification for your work, be scrupulously attentive, during your college course, to whatever concerns your health, and consider it as a sacred duty to guard against every thing that would put it in jeopardy.

I remark, in the next place, that there is danger that the character of the ministry

may suffer from a neglect on the part of college students to cultivate *good manners*.

I am aware that there are those who regard this as of little moment; whose maxim is, "Only show us the substantial qualities of a good man, and it matters little with what manners they may be associated." But this maxim is utterly at war both with truth and wisdom. It is contradicted by the established principles of human nature — nay, even by the experience of those who profess to hold it; for, if you could find a man who was insensible to the influence of manners, you would find one who was at least an anomaly in the race. Believe me, it is not mere intellectual power or moral worth, in which the elements of one's usefulness consist; for if these qualities, noble and praiseworthy as they are, are associated with an offensive exterior, they lose, to the eye of the world in general, more than half their lustre. The reason of this is, that the manners are regarded as the outward expression of the character — an index to the workings of the inward man; and where, from any cause, the external does injustice to the internal, the individual concerned cannot

fail to be the loser. Besides, if the inward feelings give complexion to the manners, the manners in turn exert a powerful influence upon the feelings; and herein partly consists the process by which the mind trains itself either to good or evil.

To no class, I am confident, do these remarks apply with greater force, than to ministers of the gospel. To the cultivation or the neglect of their manners is to be attributed much of the good which they enjoy and accomplish on the one hand, and much of the embarrassment to which they are subjected — of the positive evil which often follows in the track of their efforts, on the other. Suppose a young man at the close of his theological course, to be a candidate for settlement over some intelligent congregation — they will inquire first no doubt concerning his intellectual and moral qualifications; but rely on it, they will not have finished their inquiries, till they have asked concerning his manners; and it is not improbable that what they hear of him in this latter respect, may actually decide the question — so nearly may other things be balanced — whether they will receive him as

their minister. Or suppose him to have become a settled pastor — whether he secures the affection of his people or is regarded by them with indifference or even with disgust — whether he has the ready access to them of a confidential friend in all circumstances, or is looked upon as a stranger who has little interest in their welfare, and whom they care not to approach — whether, in short, he has an agreeable ministry or is pressed continually with difficulties, will depend, if not chiefly, yet in no inconsiderable degree, upon the character of his manners. I will not say that a minister who is greatly lacking in this respect, may not be useful — even eminently useful; for he may possess other qualifications in such extraordinary measure, as to make up somewhat for his deficiency in this; but I do say that, whatever his other qualifications may be, the addition of this could not fail to render him far more acceptable as well as useful in any sphere of ministerial labour.

Now it is during the period of college life that the manners generally receive their fixed

and ultimate direction: what an individual is in this respect when he receives his diploma, he probably will be substantially through the whole period of his ministry. And you cannot reflect a moment without perceiving that there are influences here, adverse to the formation of good manners, on the right hand and on the left. The great familiarity that generally exists within the walls of college, the little responsibility that is felt in regard to personal appearance, the absence of a mother's watchful eye and of a sister's refined and gentle bearing, and I may add, of the influence of female society generally — all these circumstances expose the student to become careless in his manners, if not actually to contract the habits of a clown. And then, on the other hand, an extravagant fondness for mingling in worldly society, aided by excessive vanity and a lack of good taste, may cast the manners into such a mould, that they shall come out wearing the most revolting features of dandyism. I would not care to choose between a clerical clown and a clerical fop; but if I knew a college student who

was bent upon being either, I would beg him to manifest his regard for the ministry by keeping out of it.

I am the more deeply impressed with the importance of this point, young gentlemen, from being able to contemplate it in the light of actual history; to trace the connection in cases not a few, between the manners of the college student, and the subsequent manners of the minister of the gospel. I remember an individual whose name, when he was in college, was the synonyme of whatever is coarse and clownish; who not only was utterly regardless of all decent usages, but actually gloried in his vulgar habits; whose presence in a gentleman's house was like the ingress of some filthy animal — that man, in an evil hour, resolved upon the ministry as a profession; and in due time he entered it; and he was far from being destitute of talents, and I know not that any one questioned his piety; but the habits which he had contracted and cherished in college, remained with him, till I believe he was actually driven from the profession before the withering frown of public indignation. I remember another whose

manners in college partook too much of worldly levity; who carried his regard to the forms of polite society so far as to seem like an idolater of fashion; who would be marked in the crowd for the extravagance of his dress, and his studied conformity to the most rigid etiquette — he, too, became a minister; but his character in this respect never changed. He was always a clerical dandy. He dressed for the pulpit as another would dress for the ball-room. A portion of his charge congratulated themselves that they had a man of the world for their minister, while at least some of the better portion used to retire from the sanctuary to their closets and weep. Years ago he finished his course; and I will only say that a thick cloud has gathered around his name.

Take warning, young gentlemen, by examples like these, and let your manners as students, be such as will not hereafter dishonour your character as ministers. Remember that the true source of good manners is right dispositions. Cultivate humility, as that which will lead you to keep your own place, and save you from ostentation and arrogance,

Cultivate self respect, as that which will raise you above every appearance of meanness, and throw around you an air of genuine dignity. Cultivate benevolence, as that which will dispose you to scatter blessings wherever you are, and give to all your deportment an irresistible attraction. Pay all due respect to the forms of society, but let not this be the only element in which you live. Let your intercourse with each other, be it ever so familiar, always be respectful and decorous, and worthy of your character as candidates for the ministry. If greater things than this are required of you, remember that this cannot be dispensed with, without jeopardizing vastly important interests.

I come now to speak of the dangers to the ministry from the temptations of college students to form bad *intellectual* habits.

None but the wildest enthusiasts, the pretenders to immediate inspiration, will deny the importance of a cultivated intellect to a minister of the gospel. It is with the intellect primarily that he has to do in the discharge of the duties of his office; for though his ultimate object is not attained, till the

heart is brought into subjection to the truth, yet the intellect must receive the truth before the heart can feel it; and surely no other than an enlightened and well disciplined mind can be supposed to possess the skill adequate to this high intellectual responsibility; — to leading the minds of men aright on subjects, in respect to which their hearts are naturally wrong. And it makes nothing against this position to say, that some individuals of very limited acquirements have been honoured with extensive usefulness in the ministry; for to say nothing of the fact that we are often misled by appearances in respect to the amount of good that is actually accomplished, we are to bear in mind that these are solitary cases; and that if there is here and there an untrained mind which, from its extraordinary powers or peculiar circumstances, breaks through all obstacles into a course of considerable usefulness, the mass of those who make this experiment prove, by their signal failure, the indispensable necessity of a thorough course of mental culture. And then, too, the general credit of the ministry is concerned in this matter. A weak minis-

try, an ignorant ministry, can never command the respect of the world: while it will paralyze the energies of the pulpit, and thus virtually nullify God's ordinance, those who look on and see how it is degraded, will have no conception of its legitimate power, if indeed they do not actually discredit its divine origin.

And is there not danger that the intellectual character of the ministry may suffer from the want of vigorous application on the part of college students? Temptations to an indolent habit in such a place as this, are, by no means, confined to the low and the vicious: they are shared in common by persons of all descriptions — not excepting even those of an elevated piety. You may be tempted to indolence from the fact of your possessing an unusually cheerful disposition, and becoming, before you are aware of it, the centre of too many social circles; or from having formed too high an estimate of your own powers, presuming upon your ability as a substitute for actual effort; or from yielding unduly to discouragement, because your standing as a scholar is less elevated than you had hoped. It may be said, indeed, that those who have

the ministry in view, ought to be above the influence of such unworthy considerations — and so indeed they ought; but that some of them are not, the college history of each successive year will testify. And the effect of yielding to any of these temptations, is not merely that there is a less amount of intellectual attainment to be carried into the theological course, and ultimately into the ministry, but that there is a habit formed adverse to subsequent application — a habit that will ere long stamp its possessor with the character of an indolent minister.

But it is necessary, in order to the successful prosecution of the ministry, that there should be a habit, not merely of diligent study, but of well directed study — the cultivation not merely of a portion of the faculties, but of all the faculties. The office of a minister puts in requisition the whole intellectual man — the judgment, the memory, the reasoning faculty, the imagination, each has an important part to perform, and if either be neglected, the ministry suffers proportionable loss. Some allowance must indeed be made for different intellectual constitutions; and some respect

no doubt should be had to this difference in the means employed to develope the faculties; but after all, no man is ever properly trained for the sacred office, whose mind has not been developed in something like due proportions; — much less he, whose education has consisted chiefly in the riding of some intellectual hobby. We have had, still have, preachers, who never open their lips in the pulpit, but to illustrate the case to which I refer. When they were in college, they were mathematicians, and nothing else; and now they are a sort of mathematical preachers: if their sermons are as clear, so also they are as cold, as a December night. Or else, during their college course, they eschewed all the more solid branches, and were never satisfied unless they were walking up and down Elysian fields; and now they are hanging wreaths of flowers around the pulpit, and those who go to listen to them, expect to sit and revel amid the sunbeams of a glowing fancy. I do not say that, in either of these cases, the ministry will be entirely powerless; for where divine truth is presented in *any* form, God's Spirit *may* give it effect; but it will certainly lose

much of its power — it will be quite another thing than what Heaven designed it should be.

As the most effectual security against the evil of which I have spoken, let me recommend to you, young gentlemen, to aim at the highest degree of perfection in all the branches that belong to your college course. Say not of one study and another, "I can afford to pass lightly over this, because it can have no bearing upon my success as a minister"— you may not say this of any kind of knowledge; for even though you should not be able *directly* to turn it to account in your future profession, yet there is no species of intellectual attainment but will add to your general weight of character, while the effort by which it is made will quicken and enlarge the intellect itself. The course of study which is here prescribed, has been drawn out by great and far reaching minds; and if you venture to take counsel of your own wisdom, or rather your own inclination, devoting yourselves almost exclusively to some branches, and passing over others as carelessly as will consist with remaining in your class, be assured you offend, not only against the dignity of this institution,

against your obligations to your teachers, but against your own best interests — against the claims of that profession to which you aspire. I would say to one and all of you, make it a matter of conscience to be thoroughly prepared for every recitation; and whatever leisure this may leave you, you may devote to any intellectual pursuits to which your taste and judgment may incline.

Perhaps this kind of delinquency in students is most frequently found in connection with a strong passion for general reading; and in too many instances I fear I must add, light reading. A student comes hither with the most thorough preparation, and at the outset gives promise of even eminent scholarship; but at no distant period, his teachers discover indications of halting, and gradually his standing becomes sadly reduced. And wherein consists the secret of the change? Is it that he is wasting his time upon his bed, or lounging in the apartments of his companions, or devising schemes of sensual gratification? Oh no; the whole secret of it is, that he has a taste for poetry, or novels, or some other species of

light reading — *that* is the leech which, unperceived by his teachers, is drawing away the life blood of his scholarship, his reputation, his usefulness. I have my eye upon an individual now in the ministry, (and no doubt there are hundreds of them,) whose case is exactly that which I have here supposed. Previous to his joining college, and for some time after, he ranked among the very first for talents, for diligence, for apparently sincere and earnest piety. But before the first year of his course was past, his attention to the prescribed studies began to give place to a habit of light reading; and here commenced a decline in scholarship, in devotion, in respectability, and I may add in enjoyment, which continued till he seemed to have become transformed into quite another man. Notwithstanding all this, he unfortunately adhered to his original purpose of entering the ministry; but he has never given out more than a dubious and feeble light. It is not too much to say that his very limited usefulness as a minister, is to be referred chiefly to the inveterate habit contracted in college, of

reading light productions. What young man who has the ministry in view, will venture deliberately to incur such hazard?

There is one more intellectual habit at which I must just hint, as being unfavourable to the prospect of success in the ministry — I mean a habit of intellectual affectation — a habit of thinking and writing darkly upon plain subjects — of conjuring up a fog in which established principles are mistaken for newly discovered truths, only because they are seen obscurely, and out of their right proportions. Think not that I would have the student satisfied to remain forever on the surface of things, or that I would not have him trained to patient and laborious investigation. I would bid him God speed, even in the remotest regions of philosophical inquiry, provided only he keep within the legitimate bounds of human knowledge. What I object to as putting at hazard his success as a minister, is a studied obscurity where the occasion for it does not exist — a love of mystery, if I may be allowed the expression, for its own sake. We have in the ministry at this day some fine examples of great minds that can

move with admirable grace as well as power, in the higher regions of thought; and though they may sometimes task our faculties in an unwonted degree, yet we are glad to submit to it, for we are always the wiser for having listened to them. But the fact cannot be concealed, that there are others, who, if they do not task our faculties, task our graces — at least the grace of patience, in compelling us to listen to that from which the most earnest attention can elicit no meaning; who, while they profess to be exhibiting God's truth in some of its remoter connections, are really wandering about in some field of chaos of their own forming, where the light has not begun to be divided from the darkness. If God ever works by such a ministry as this, it only shows his prerogative to accomplish good by evil. But wherever such a case exists, you will in all probability find that the evil had its origin in the cultivation of a false taste during the college course. If you will go to the institution of which the individual was a graduate, and inquire concerning the history of his career, it will be strange if you do not learn *that*, which accounts most satisfactorily

for all the profound and elaborate nonsense that he gives out from the pulpit.

I am sure, young gentlemen, I need not urge you to beware of this miserable affectation. Guard against it by habitually cultivating simplicity both of thought and expression. Ascend as high as you will; sink into the depths as far as you may; but do not get bewildered, especially do not attempt to bewilder others, by dreamy and unintelligible speculations. In the writings of Hall, and Mason, and Webster, and other of the great lights of the world, you cannot find a sentence that does not lie in sunbeams; and if you are ever tempted to imagine that there is dignity in obscurity, study the productions of these matchless intellects, and learn your mistake.

From the intellectual, let me pass to the *moral* and *religious,* habits of students; and if I mistake not, we shall find that the ministry is in greater danger at this point than any other. For it is here especially that its vitality, its power, is centered. An imbecile ministry is not so bad as a corrupt one: the want of proper intellectual qualifications may render it comparatively powerless; but the want of

suitable moral qualities will be likely to convert it into an engine of fearful evil. What then are some of those dispositions, by the cultivation of which college students are in danger of lowering the character, and neutralizing the power, of the ministry?

I may mention, in the first place, a spirit of worldliness, taking the place, it may be, of an elevated tone of religious feeling. That such a change often occurs, will not be questioned by any one who has made much observation on the characters of college students; — that it *should* occur, will not appear strange to any who have much knowledge of the peculiar economy of college life. There are various influences here favourable to the production of it; but I can barely hint at one or two of them. One grows out of the supposed want of time for the regular and faithful discharge of those private duties with which the life of godliness is more immediately connected. The student, at the commencement of his course, is oppressed with perhaps more claims upon his time than he had anticipated: possibly it becomes necessary for him even to trim the midnight lamp, in order

to maintain the standing to which he aspires; and in these circumstances he finds an apology for relaxing a little from the strictness of his devotional habits, on the ground that his intellectual attainments are all to be consecrated to Christ in the holy ministry; and with this as a salvo to his conscience, he proceeds step by step, till at no distant period, the scholar has completely thrown the christian into the shade. Another influence not less hazardous, results from the character of the society into which he is thrown. Perhaps, owing to some peculiar circumstances, his intimate associates may be from the ranks of the irreligious; or else they may be professors of religion who have abjured its spirituality, and who wish to strengthen themselves by adding to their own number; and as he mingles from day to day with either the one class or the other, how certain is it, unless his face is set like a flint to resist temptation, that he will gradually become undevout and worldly minded — will make shipwreck of both his consistency and his comfort. He flatters himself with the reflection that some allowance in respect to his strictly religious duties,

may reasonably be made for the peculiarities of college life; and that when he shall have completed his academical course, he shall be prepared to return to his wonted spirituality and strictness; little imagining that he is forming a habit, that will hold him afterwards, as with a cord of iron, even when he desires to escape from it.

Trace now the effect of a habit of worldliness thus acquired, upon his subsequent course. As the time of his graduation approaches, a question which had been considered as perfectly settled even before he entered college, now urges itself upon him anew — viz: whether he shall devote himself to the ministry or some other profession. He cannot indeed but remember his early vows, the deliberation and earnestness with which he once determined to give himself perhaps even to missionary life; and possibly the cherished hopes of christian parents and friends, in respect to his future usefulness as a minister of Christ; and these are reflections that cannot but sit painfully upon his conscience. But then on the other hand, in a self-pacifying spirit which he mistakes for conscientiousness, he reflects

that the ministry has such mighty responsibilities, that it may be unsafe for so feeble a christian as he is to encounter them; and perhaps he has found out that he is the subject of some constitutional tendencies that especially disqualify him for the profession; and on the whole, he arrives at the conclusion that he can serve God and his generation to better purpose in some secular vocation. The truth is, that his spirituality has all fled; and with it his desire to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ; and all this perverted reasoning is designed only to conceal from himself the sad reality of his condition. After all, taking the case as it is, no doubt he chooses the better, or rather the least disastrous, side of the alternative. But it may be that he comes to a different conclusion — that, notwithstanding the great change that has come over him, he adheres to his original determidation to enter the ministry. Perhaps he relies on the recuperative energy of christian character, taking for granted that when he is brought in actual contact with the duties of the sacred office, he shall become more spi-

ritually minded of course. Or perhaps his views of the ministry are lowered in accommodation to the change in his feelings, and he looks forward to it merely as furnishing a lounging place for indolence, or opening a race course to ambition. At any rate, the worldly minded student turns out to be a worldly minded minister. It costs him no effort to make himself at home in the circles of the gay. The more spiritual duties of his profession, even so far as respects the external act, he evidently regards as mere drudgery. He may be a gifted man; he may be an agreeable companion; he may be courteous and generous and high minded; but the spirit appropriate to the ministry — alas, where is it? and I may add, the *fruits* appropriate to the ministry — alas, where are *they?*

I must not omit to say in this connection, that there are instances in which students enter college with the ministry in view, who, in the progress of their course, not only contract a spirit of worldliness, but become absolutely abandoned, and renounce even the decencies of a christian profession. I know

of a young man who joined one of our colleges a few years ago, on a foundation provided by the charities of the church; and at the time, there was not, to my knowledge, a spot upon his character. As the college was situated in the neighbourhood of a considerable city, it was found at no distant period, that he was in the habit of making frequent visits to the city, and of now and then attending the circus and the theatre; and when some of his christian friends remonstrated with him on the impropriety of such a course, he justified himself on the ground that it was an important means of gaining a knowledge of the world. The several steps in his decline, it is not necessary that I should mark: suffice it to say that his ultimate profession was that, not of a minister of the gospel, but of a common tumbler in the circus; and at the date of my last information concerning him, he was associated with a herd of vulgar mountebanks who stroll about the country as a sort of circulating nuisance. At what a fearful price did that young man gain his knowledge of the world! He is indeed lost to himself, lost to his friends, lost to the

church; but there is warning in his history which I hope may not be lost upon *you*.

There is danger, again, that the ministry will suffer from the indulgence, on the part of college students, of an unhallowed ambition. Not that I would discourage in the student a laudable emulation — even the desire to make large attainments in comparison with his fellows, provided only that that desire do not partake of a proud or envious spirit, and that it be itself subordinate to the paramount desire of doing good. But the danger is, that there will be kindled up here, even in the bosom of the christian student, a sort of emulation which the spirit of the gospel disowns — an emulation of which strife and vain glory are the leading elements; and that thus it will come to pass that in the same process of intense application, by which he cheats himself out of some of his most precious privileges, he cherishes within, a viper that is preying continually on the very vitals of his spirituality. This unhallowed temper is perhaps less easily detected than almost any other by the individual who is the subject of it; but to every other eye, its actings are

most visible; and it mars the beauty of christian character, not less than it lowers the tone of christian feeling.

But here again, see how this spirit which has been cherished during a four years' residence in college, comes out subsequently to curse the ministry. The student, has, perhaps unconsciously, been more than willing to see others sink, that he might rise; and do you think that there is no danger that the minister will be another Diotrephes, loving to have the prëeminence? Need I say that this spirit has multiplied itself into a legion in our day; and that we have had men all over the church, and in every communion, who have been examples of it? They have mistaken the love of influence for the love of Christ; and have done evil deeds, I had almost said desperate deeds, professedly for the sake of conscience, but really for the sake of fame; and the voice of expostulation has fallen powerless upon their ear, while they have dreamed that a Reformer's glory had already begun to encircle their names. I may say with confidence that the history of a large portion of the evils to which the church

has been subjected, is nothing less than a history of the ambition of her ministers. What candidate for the ministry will not tremble at the thought of contributing to swell this amount of evil?

Let me say further, that there is danger, not only that this spirit of rivalry in college will come to form a permanent element of the character, but that it will beget unkind feelings and unworthy prejudices, that may survive the college course, and be perpetuated to the reproach of the ministry. I have sometimes been surprised at what has seemed to me the unreasonably low estimate that one minister has expressed of another; but the mystery has been entirely cleared up, when I have come to know that they sustained to each other the relation of rivals when they were in college, and that the feelings incident to their rivalry had never worn away. Who does not know how much of the power of the ministry depends upon good fellowship — upon a kindly mutual appreciation — upon a fraternal cöoperation for the accomplishment of its benevolent purposes? How important that nothing should occur between students

that should be adverse to such a result! And on what fearful responsibility does that student venture, who, during his residence here, receives into his heart seeds, that will yield only a harvest of poison, through his whole ministry?

I only add, under this general topic, that college students sometimes do great harm to the ministry, by spiritual pride, discovering itself in sanctimonious airs, in extravagant pretensions, and even in an obtrusive officiousness. That no body here may suspect me of being personal, I will go back for my examples of the spirit to which I refer, about a quarter of a century. In a town in which is situated one of our most important colleges, there grew up, under the influence of a few individuals, an association of laymen, the business of whose members was to go forth into the neighbouring towns, and hold private interviews and publick meetings, with a view to rouse both the churches and their ministers to a sense of neglected duty. Many of the college students quickly became associated with the new enterprize; and some of them, I know, in their zeal, forgot their wisdom,

and even their decency. One of them — a freshman too — I well remember, came on a sort of missionary visit to my own congregation; and the second sentence with which he greeted me was, "Sir, I have come to see what *I* can do towards building up Zion here among you." Suffice it to say, that that state of things turned out to be any thing but propitious to the best interests of the church. Not a few of those who partook of it most deeply, were, within a moderate period, in the very frigid zone of christianity; while there were some whose later career has been still more dubious and distressing. I have always believed that that cloud, not bigger than a man's hand, foretold the desolating tempest of fanaticism, that has since swept over many portions of our American church.

There are two points of view in which this spirit in students may be regarded as ominous of evil to the ministry. In the first place, it can hardly fail to subject the pastors of churches among whom they sojourn, to no inconsiderable embarrassment; and I know there have been cases in which its operations especially in the way of dictation, have seemed,

beyond endurance. And then again, if they are to carry this spirit with them into the sacred office, what must be the effect upon their own character and usefulness? What church will open her arms to receive them; or having received them, will be likely to remain satisfied with their ministrations?

Let me caution you then, young gentlemen, against the least approach to this unworthy spirit. Be serious and circumspect, but not sanctimonious or austere. When you begin to take airs of artificial sanctity, be assured that the simplicity and loveliness of christian character are deserting you. Be active in doing good; good to your fellow students; good to all whom your influence may reach; and be not satisfied unless each successive day shall behold some new monument of your fidelity in the service of Christ; but let all your efforts be put forth in the spirit of deference and subordination, of charity and a sound mind. Thus, while your college course will be directly fruitful of blessings to others, it will constitute the appropriate preparation for an honoured and useful ministry.

Having spoken thus at length of the dangers

to the ministry, from the neglect of college students in respect to their health, their manners, their intellectual, moral and religious habits, it might seem perhaps that every important point belonging to my general subject had passed under review. But there is yet one thing more that occurs to me, as too important to be overlooked — I mean the matter of *prudence*. I say, then, in the last place, there is great danger that the ministry will be subjected to reproach from that habit of heedless indiscretion, which there is so much in college that is adapted to foster.

The same general remark applies here that I have already had occasion to make in respect to manners — those who are assembled here are generally of nearly the same age; they have a community of pursuits, and are necessarily brought into intimate relations; and on some accounts they feel less accountableness in regard to what they say and do, than in almost any other circumstances in which they could be placed. How natural that, in such a state of things, they should acquire a loose habit of conversation — I do not mean a habit of uttering things positively wicked, but

things that do not consist with a considerate and delicate regard to propriety. But such a habit as this carried into the ministry, cannot fail to prove a fruitful source of harm, both to him who is the subject of it, and to those with whom he associates. In not a small portion of the cases in which the question is asked, what alienated the affections of a people from their minister, or what separated a minister from his charge, I fear the true answer would be, his own imprudence in respect to small matters.

There is one point connected with the general subject of prudence, to which I must be allowed to advert with a little particularity — I mean premature and indiscreet arrangements on the part of college students in reference to the matrimonial connection. Let no one say that this is a matter that comes only within the jurisdiction of impulse and accident, and that it is in vain to prescribe rules or even offer counsels, where the feelings, after all, will have their own way. Nor let it be said that, if it *must* be introduced, this is not the time or the place for it; — that all lessons touching a matter of so much delicacy

should be privately whispered in the ear, and not blazoned before a publick assembly. My answer to the first of these objections is, that an individual loses his moral agency no more in relation to this subject than any other, and that he is as truly bound to be governed by the dictates of wisdom in the choice of a wife as in the choice of a profession. My answer to the second is, that that would be false delicacy that should lead one whom you had asked to be your monitor on an occasion like this, to feel that his lips must be sealed on a subject of momentous bearing on your future usefulness, merely because it may be surrounded in some minds with light and gay associations. The best way of estimating its importance, is to contemplate some of the numerous facts by which it is illustrated.

A student in the midst of his college course, having the ministry in view, suffers himself to become strongly attached to some gay and fascinating young lady; and without taking counsel of any of his friends, or even of his own judgment, he makes proposals of marriage which result in a speedy engagement. The first visible effect of this movement is in

his declining scholarship; and the next in his declining piety; the secret of which is that there are claims upon his time, upon his thoughts, upon his affections, now, that formerly did not exist. But possibly it may turn out that this is only the beginning of evil. The engagement has reference to a future and somewhat distant period; and who can tell what some of the many days that will pass before that period arrives, may bring with them? Perhaps it may turn out that the feeling which originated the proposal was a mere paroxysm of youthful admiration, and not a settled attachment; and possibly in connection with this discovery is another — that the object of the supposed attachment is utterly unqualified for the responsible station of a minister's wife. And now mark the painful alternative to which he is subjected — he must either recede from the engagement, or he must adhere to it. In the former case, he violates a sacred obligation; he puts in jeopardy perhaps for life the happiness of one, who, however unworthy to be his companion, had deserved no such treatment as this at his hands; he incurs the censure of the commu-

nity at large; in a word, he brings a cloud over his prospects of usefulness; and if he is permitted subsequently to enter the ministry, still this early lapse is never forgotten — he is pointed at as the man, minister though he be, who once dishonourably and cruelly violated a matrimonial engagement. Or suppose he take the latter side of the alternative, and fulfil his engagement, as no doubt he is bound to do, irrespective of the evil consequences to which it may subject him — who can measure the injury to his usefulness, to his comfort, to every earthly interest, which such a step may involve? His wife may be a gay woman, and tempt him into scenes which a minister's presence should never justify; or she may be a weak woman, unable even to appreciate his own vigour of intellect, and subjecting him to mortification in every circle; or she may be an imprudent woman, having a tongue that is obedient to all sorts of impulses, and kindling up many more fires of contention than he can quench. But still she is his wife; and what he has to do is to make the best of those evils which, by his own folly, he has rendered inevitable. He moves from place to

place; but to every place he carries the source of his trouble along with him. His spirits are depressed, his energies broken, his heart wrung; but he may not speak of what he suffers even to his most confidential friend; for what will not a man suffer rather than acknowledge that he is embarrassed, and plagued, and mortified by his own wife?

You will not understand me, young gentlemen, as intimating that the case which I have now supposed, in all its painful and revolting features, is of very frequent occurrence; much less that it is the ordinary result of what may be considered premature matrimonial arrangements; nor am I at all disposed to question that such arrangements, however liable to objection, frequently result in a happy and useful connection. I would say, better, safer, no doubt, in all ordinary cases, that this concern should be postponed to a later period; but where it is not, it should never be approached but with the most considerate caution. No student who is looking forward to the ministry, should select a companion for life, without a distinct reference to her qualifications as a minister's wife; and no

attractions whatever should be allowed to stand in place of these for a moment. If it is a matter in which he is primarily interested, and therefore has a right to choose for himself, it is a matter in which the church has a deep interest also, and she has a right to demand that he should choose discreetly.

Nothing now remains, young gentlemen, but that I should suggest two or three considerations, with a view to urge my subject upon your thoughtful and earnest regard.

Allow me to say, then, that the same reason that induces you to think of the ministry as a profession at all, should lead you to aspire to the highest degree of usefulness in it; and of course to guard against all those influences which would interfere with such a result. What led you, my young friend, to form the purpose of giving yourself to this sacred work? I think I hear you answer, "If my heart does not deceive me, it was the desire to glorify God in promoting the best interests of my fellow men." Then, if you are sincere in this, you desire to glorify him to the extent of your ability — to glorify him by rendering your ministry the source of the greatest pos-

sible good. But in order to do this, you must aim at the highest perfection of character; and this you can never do, if you yield to those influences which have now been pointed out to you. Nay, this is not all; for in proportion as you yield to them, you have reason to question the honesty of your purpose in choosing the ministry as a profession — you have reason even to fear that you are a stranger to the renovating power of God's Spirit. But we hope better things of you, young gentlemen, though we thus speak. We will not allow ourselves to doubt that you will aim at the highest standard of intelligence and purity and usefulness. You will keep your eye fixed on Jesus Christ, as at once the pattern of perfection, and the fountain of grace and holiness. You will have no communion with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

Remember, further, that the ministry is God's ordinance; and that it must be presumption in the extreme to do any thing, or be any thing, that will impair its efficiency. It is no light thing to pervert the good institutions of *men*, or to interfere in any way with

their success; and he who does this is justly marked as the enemy of his race. But here is an ordinance which God himself hath established, and into which he has thrown the energy of his wisdom, and power, and grace: it is emphatically *the* ordinance by which he designs to reconcile man to God, and thus carry forward the mediatorial work; and who is he that will venture to throw himself in the way of its legitimate operation? Remember that it is possible to do this carelessly, even ignorantly, as well as designedly. You are chargeable with this, if you allow yourselves to cherish dispositions, and form habits, that will unfit you, in any degree, for the ministerial work. You are chargeable with this, at least in a modified sense, if you fail to bring to your work that measure of physical, intellectual and spiritual energy, which is fairly within your reach. Let the thought that you are to be CHRIST'S ambassadors, ever be present to your minds, exciting you to the most thoughtful vigilance, to the most diligent effort. How can you stand up before your fellow men to plead God's cause with their hearts and consciences, how will you stand up

before your final Judge to render an account of your Heaven constituted embassy, if, by your own voluntary delinquencies, you have rendered yourselves incapable of wielding, as you ought, the sword of the Spirit?

Another consideration that deserves to be seriously pondered by you, is, that your ministry is likely to fall into a singularly eventful period — a period that will require ministers of more than ordinary intellectual and spiritual stature. We may not indeed venture to pronounce too confidently upon the future; for the events of the future are, to a great extent, secrets in the bosom of the Unsearchable. If, however, there be any light in prophecy, or any meaning in providence, it is not easy to resist the conviction that an age to be signalized by moral wonders is now opening upon the world. The conflict between the powers of light and of darkness waxes more fierce and terrible every hour; and there are those, and men too who have never passed for fanatics, who believe that Christianity will, before many years, be gathering her triumphs again, from scenes of martyrdom. And what sort of ministers,

think you, will be needed to meet such an exigency as this? No others surely will avail, but your men of might — men on whom a plentiful baptism of the Holy Ghost hath fallen, enriching them with all spiritual gifts — with firmness and greatness of purpose, with strength to suffer as well as to labour, with unshaken confidence in Immanuel's power and grace. But even, if no such exigency as this should arise, still the movements of providence will become more rapid and wonderful; Messiah will be travelling in the greatness of his strength toward his universal reign; and how much of wisdom, of fortitude, of patience, of zeal, of every grace, will be necessary to an intelligent and effective co-operation with him in the accomplishment of his glorious purposes! Suppose the students of our colleges — suppose you, young gentlemen, who are now in preparation for the sacred office, should yield to the temptations against which it has been the design of this discourse to put you on your guard, and in consequence should enter the ministry with comparatively unfurnished minds, with indolent and effeminate habits, with at best an

equivocal claim to christian character — where will be the men to whose wisdom the church in the next generation shall look for counsel, and under whose faithful and skilful teaching she shall be growing in knowledge and in grace — the men who shall stand erect in troublous times, and not count their lives dear to them, if their Master's honour should demand the sacrifice? But here again, I am supposing what I am sure, will not occur. You will take counsel of the spirit of the age, speaking in great events, and in the throes and heavings of Providence for the production of greater still, and will resolve, in the strength of God, to be ready for any difficult service, for any threatening danger, to which he may call you.

And may I not say, last of all, you owe it to this venerable seat of learning, this foster mother of the ministers of Christ, this cradle of the spirit of missions, that you admit this subject to your most considerate and practical regard. I venerate this spot, when I recur to the scenes and the events of which it has been the theatre. Your beautiful grounds seem to me clothed with a deeper enchantment, your

hills and vallies bear a brighter hue of verdure, the very air around me is perfumed with a richer fragrance, when I remember that here were those strugglings of faith, those prayers that could not be denied, in which originated plans of benevolent enterprize, that had the world for their field. And so also I would gratefully and reverently remember that here the arm of the Lord has often been revealed in the new-creating work; that genius and learning have, in instances not a few, come bending within yonder walls to the cross of Christ; and that there has sometimes been occasion in reference to what has passed here, to adopt the prophet's admiring exclamation, "Who are these that fly as a cloud and as the doves to their windows?" Could I believe for a moment that this college was in danger of changing its religious character with the present generation of students — of losing that spirit of earnest piety and missionary zeal, for which it has hitherto been distinguished, I would beseech Heaven and earth to help me in an effort to prevent it. I would implore the ocean grave of the lamented Mills to speak. I would try to raise a voice from the

far distant and humble mounds, beneath which Hall and Richards and Harvey repose, and over which the shadows of a Pagan night still brood. I would invoke the shade of the venerable Griffin, whose fervid imagination never kindled into a brighter glow, whose eloquent tongue never gave forth sublimer thoughts, than when he was dwelling upon the past and the future of this institution. Nay, I would almost ask that these voiceless objects around me — these rocks and hills which time has not changed — might become vocal, and render their testimony concerning the lofty purposes, the holy aspirations, of the moral heroes of other days who have lingered among them. But why should I thus expostulate? I hear you say that inanimate nature shall not rebuke you — that the graves of the missionaries shall not rebuke you — that the great and the good whose names hallow your college catalogue, and shine out on the Lamb's book of life, shall be your teachers and guides, instead of your reprovers. Noble resolution! I see you in the strength of it rising up to higher and yet higher attainments in knowledge and holiness, and at length going forth

with complete and burnished armour, to do battle in the cause of Zion's king. I look down the vista of coming centuries, I linger amidst the glories of the millenial age, I plant myself in a vision of faith on yonder fields of light, and I behold your influence extending, till I have no measure with which to reach it; I behold your happiness increasing, till it has become an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

2.

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

A

SERMON

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

OF

NEW-YORK AND BROOKLYN,

IN THE

MERCER STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, N. Y.,

APRIL 7, 1850,

AND REPEATED IN THE

CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMS, BROOKLYN,

APRIL 14, 1850.

BY

ERSKINE MASON, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE BLEECKER STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, N. Y.

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1850.

SERMON.

ZECHARIAH X. 1 (FIRST CLAUSE):

"ASK YE OF THE LORD RAIN IN THE TIME OF THE LATTER RAIN."

In order to bring out before you, distinctly, the thought which is to be the basis of this discourse, the emphasis of our text must be laid upon the latter part of it. It was at the time of the latter rain, and *because* it was the time of the latter rain, that they were to ask for it. There were two seasons when the rain was accustomed to fall in the land of Judea. The one was the seeding time, and this was the season of the "former rain"; the other was the time when the ear was filling, and this was the season of the "latter rain." At these two seasons, except when God in judgment suspended his own laws, the rain fell with uniform regularity; and as it had been so from year to year, they might look upon it as a matter of course, brought about by the fixed mechanism of nature, that the rain would fall in the time of the latter rain: and this is the peculiarity of the text, that the fixed certainty of the event should be a strong motive to pray for it. And herein you perceive the contrast between the reasonings of Scripture, and those of a paralyzing fatalism on the one hand, and of a proud and boastful philosophy on the other. When the time arrives at which the rains fall, according to the regular course of nature, they will fall; natural causes will work out their invariable effects, whatever we may do, or refrain from doing. An event, certain in itself, whatever may be the ground of its certainty, will take place wholly irrespective of our praying or doing. So reasons fatalism—so reasons infi-

delity; but so reasons not the Bible. Here we have an argument to enforce prayer for rain, taken from the fact that it was the time when, according to God's appointment, the rain might be expected; thus making the certainty of an end growing out of the Divine arrangements, the grand motive to labor and pray for the accomplishment of that end. We do not stop here to enter into the philosophy of the Scriptures upon this point, but content ourselves with the mere statement of the principle itself, the illustrations of which you can find upon almost every page of the Bible. Thus, wherever a purpose of God is made known, or a promise revealed, that purpose or promise becomes the reason for prayer and effort, only as it renders certain to the mind the end which it contemplates. When we read in the Old Testament Scriptures those glowing prophecies of coming joy and triumph to the house of Israel, in which God seems to speak of his fixed, irreversible purpose, we find appended to them this language: "Yet for all this I will be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." The reason for the prayer grows out of the certainty which the Divine purpose establishes of the event, as though no one would enter heartily into the work of supplication, who did not regard the end prayed for as fixed beyond all peradventure.

Now, I take this simple Scriptural principle and set it before you, as suggesting an interesting train of thought to the Christian mind, concerning the object, and our duty in reference to it, which specially demands our attention this evening. And I do it the more readily, because whatever may have been the primary application of the text, its ultimate reference is probably to those large measures of influence from on high, and those grand results, which should mark the latter days, when God was to pour out his Spirit upon all flesh. Looking upon ourselves, therefore, as living at the time of the "latter rain," we intend to infer from this fact our duty, and in view of it, not simply to estimate the character, but also to determine the weight of our responsibilities.

We believe, or profess to believe, that this world is to be converted unto God; that as a result of the Divine purpose, fixed and irreversible, the "grace which reigns through right-

eousness" is to triumph over the ruins of the apostasy; that however many and great are to be the strugglings between the conflicting elements of good and evil, between light and darkness, the former shall eventually secure the ascendency; truth shall achieve its victories, as "all shall know the Lord, from the least even unto the greatest," and holiness shall prevail, as "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." We look at this matter with a Christian eye, and find our warrant for this faith in the Word of truth. There are, I will admit, aside from the express statements of the Word of God, many considerations which throw an aspect of great probability upon this grand result which our faith contemplates. The gospel of Jesus Christ has an air of universality about it which seems to indicate that it was never destined to be limited in its influence, and confined to particular sections of the human family. We see that it is the very thing which human nature everywhere needs,—if not the only thing, yet the only thing of which we have any knowledge, which can lift humanity up from its deep degradations; and everywhere almost throughout the world we see, or think we see, the working of influences which must disenthrall the human mind from bondage of every kind, and bring it into "the liberty wherewith the gospel makes men free." Such considerations, however, are valuable, not as constituting a warrant for faith, but as cumulative testimony coming in afterward, to strengthen a faith which the word and promise of the living God have already inspired. There is no evidence, aside from the declarations of the inspired oracles, that we know of, to originate, however much there may be to deepen and confirm, a conviction of the regeneration of the world. There may be speculations and surmises, very rational in their nature; there may be a collation of facts, which seem to indicate as very probable a great change coming over the face of the earth; but there is nothing to put the nature of that change past all doubt, to bring the mind to that fixed confidence in its certainty, which, as it awakens a sense of responsibility, leads to corresponding exertion. The element of all active, untiring Christian industry, the source of that prayer which has power

with God, the mainspring of that effort which alone secures a blessing from on high, is found in a simple faith in the Divine promise,—nowhere else. In such faith, though it be but as a grain of mustard-seed, there is more of that power which the Church of God needs, and must have to accomplish her purposes, than in all the convictions however intelligent which the human mind has ever reached, as a result of mere philosophical speculations, or of inquiries into the tendencies of all the causes, physical, social, or political, which are now at work in the world.

If I do not greatly mistake the aspect of things, we need to be brought back to the simplicity of faith. In these latter days, when throughout the world nothing is certain but change; when the human mind almost everywhere seems to be waking up from the slumber of centuries; when the spirit of enterprise is putting itself forth and making itself felt in every direction; when distant lands are brought together in a manner which appears almost to annihilate time and space; when the Christian mind of the world leads in all these enterprises, and by means of them extends its influence; when it is perfectly plain to every observer that Christian sentiment is working its way, and that lying back of all occasions and proximate causes, it is producing the restlessness and change which is everywhere observable;—there is great danger that we shall look entirely to these signs of the times, as constituting the reasons of our faith in the speedy triumph of Christianity, and lose sight, in a great measure, of the promise of God, which alone can inspire the confidence which wakens to prayer and nerves for effort.

I begin, then, all my reasonings upon this subject, with the promise of God. I believe that the religion of the gospel shall triumph, because the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it; and having fixed my faith here, then I look abroad upon the world, and study "the signs of the times," not for the purpose of speculating upon or judging of the probabilities of the event itself, but only to strengthen a faith already existing and watch the movements of Providence as they may seem to indicate the approach of the time when the promises my faith contemplates shall receive their fulfilment. If I saw no light

breaking upon the dark places of the earth ; if I saw nothing but the prevalence of a debasing sensuality ; if there were no evidences of the upward working of the human mind in any direction ; if the atheistic spirit were rife in the world, rising and assuming vigor and boldness, while its opposite was languishing and putting forth unequivocal evidences of imbecility ; if, in addition to this, Christian faith had but little manly courage about it, and distracting influences pervaded the household of God, paralyzing its energies and exhausting its strength ;—still I should believe in the certain final triumph of Christianity, because still I should find it written here upon this page of undoubted truth, "the kingdoms of this world shall be the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." But if, when I cast my eye over the scene of this earth, I can see light breaking upon the mountains, the intellectual sluggishness of centuries disturbed, the human mind everywhere waking up and searching for truth ; if, moreover, the spirit of Christian faith was vigorous, and the spirit of atheism and sensuality was overpowered, distracted, and divided in its counsels, while the Church of God was of one mind and one heart, and that a mind and heart set upon the work before it ; then I would bring in sense and reason to assist my faith and strengthen my hope, as they seemed to indicate that the redemption of the world was drawing nigh.

With regard to faith in the promise of God itself, into which all the reasons for the certainty of this world's conversion must be resolved, let me remark that in our day we have the most decided advantage over all the generations which have preceded us. I do not mean by this to say, that faith in God's promise is any more rational now than it ever was, but that it is far more easy of exercise. We occupy a position in the history of providential developments far in advance of our ancestors,—a position which, if it does not furnish stronger reasons for faith, furnishes at least reasons for a stronger faith. A series of successful experiments in any department of science or the arts, will render confidence in the skill and knowledge of their author, which they illustrate, far more easy than it should have been had those experiments never been made, or, if made, been unsuc-

cessful; and precisely so, what has already been done in the way of the fulfilment of God's purpose, will render it comparatively easy to believe in the fulfilment of what as yet remains unexecuted.

The great end which faith contemplates, the conversion of this world to God, is to be regarded not as an isolated event, unconnected with anything which has preceded it, but as a result towards which everything has been tending,—as the full development of a plan,—the final grand consummation of a system of arrangements under which this world has been placed. It was wrapped up in the first intimation as to the triumph of the seed of the woman over the seed of the serpent; and as we now look back upon the past, we can see that every successive step which God has taken in the conduct of human affairs, has been but unfolding more distinctly the grand idea of that intimation, and bearing upon the result which is to turn it into a reality. Each of these successive steps, moreover, was the subject matter of a distinct promise, which received in it its perfect fulfilment; and now we occupy a point in the world's history, a stage in providential development, where we can with great effect bring the memories of the past to shed light upon and give certainty to the anticipations of the future. For if all the promises which God has made, and all the purposes he has revealed, subordinate to the grand promise and purpose of the conversion of the world, have been, the former fulfilled, and the latter executed to the very letter, the inference is one not easily to be set aside, that the end which they all contemplate shall be secured likewise. If God has moved forward steadily to the accomplishment of his purpose, and we can see that every one of his movements has been in strict accordance with his previous declarations; if, so far as experience sheds any light upon the subject, his faithfulness as well as his power has been tested, and put past all doubt by the event, which in every case has verified his words; then I can believe that he will continue to move steadily forward toward the result which all past dispensations have contemplated, and this grand promise, which has given meaning to all subordinate promises, will be fulfilled likewise. The Christian man who turns to his own history, and finds amid

his recorded experiences the evidence of the truthfulness of this written testimony, and the faithfulness of God who speaks therein, is perfectly satisfied that he is not in his Christianity following "a cunningly devised fable," and has a confidence, than which none can be more rational or strong, that every good word upon which his hope fastens shall be verified by the event. And the Church, as she looks back upon the way by which her Lord has led her, and sees how every word thus far has been made good, and how all the dealings of God have been preparing for, and converging toward one grand consummation, and that the subject of a distinct and intelligible promise, may be perfectly confident that in looking forward to the final triumph of Christianity, as an event absolutely certain, she is not indulging in the rhapsodies of an over-excited, over-tasked imagination, not in the reveries of a visionary, but in an expectation commended to the mind by its soberness, as it is warranted by truth which centuries have illustrated.

Upon the promise of God then, thus clearly revealed upon the sacred page, thus fully illustrated in its nature, thus proved so far as anything future can be certain of fulfilment, I fasten my faith; and now I can cast my eye over the world, and look at the appearances of things, and examine the developments of Providence, because in this promise upon which my faith fastens I have a key to unlock the mysteries of God's dispensations, and the means of discovering and explaining the nature and bearings of influences which are seen to be at work, and events which are occurring, so perplexing and mysterious to the man who never studies them in their relation to the promise and purpose of God.

We cannot, I apprehend, look with any degree of attention at "the signs of the times," in the light of revealed truth, without having the conviction forced upon us, that we are occupying an interesting point in the history of those providential developments which are to secure the fulfilment of the Divine promise. I wish to be distinctly understood as placing this conviction in connection not with any mathematical calculations of dates, or years, or cycles of prophecy; for in these, for one, I have very little faith, and regard a de-

pendence upon them not only as delusive, but as dangerous in its tendency. The man who trusts to such arithmetical processes, and has found out, beyond all question, the exact time of our Lord's coming, may be very sincere in his convictions; but the result he has reached, together with his process of reaching it, have an air of doubtfulness thrown over them by the fact, that their tendency has been to paralyze all his Christian energies, and convert the practical disciple into the mere theoretical speculator, wholly unfit for, as he is wholly unconcerned about, the great work which his Master has given him to do, of preaching the gospel to every creature.

The conviction of which I speak has an origin altogether different. It springs not from figures, but from facts,—facts totally different from any which have yet occurred in this world's history, and yet strikingly significant in view of the past,—facts, the tendency of which is not to paralyze but to rouse the energies, not to repress but to animate the spirit of prayer, and which, carefully studied in their varied relations and bearings, while they bring us to the conclusion that we are upon the eve of great changes, bring us also to that state of mind which those changes demand of the followers of Christ, that they may meet the responsibilities which are thus thrown upon them. In adverting to these facts, which furnish materials for Christian thought, and incentives to Christian action, we cannot overlook the political aspects of things, which no observing mind can regard but as fraught with the most momentous results. The little cloud which, in certain states of the atmosphere, appears in the horizon, does not more surely to the practised eye indicate approaching rain, than do certain national movements, certain signs in the political hemisphere, indicate coming changes. The "kingdom of Christ is not" indeed "of this world;" but through human management the things of that kingdom have been so interwoven in systems of earthly government, and religion has become to such an extent entangled with the policy of human courts and the stratagems of earthly cabinets, and consequently so fettered, that it cannot accomplish its purposes without changes which, as they break up these alliances, the

growth of centuries, must produce overturnings which seem, at least for the time, to throw everything into confusion.

To a superficial observer, the political phenomena which everywhere arrest the attention may seem to be but the evidence of a spirit of misrule which, long kept down by the strong hand of power, is essaying to break loose from all restraints, and assume the absolute supremacy. But one who looks beneath the surface of things, and going beyond the proximate motives of individual action, inquires into the ultimate reasons of human conduct, will discover in all these movements which excite astonishment and awaken expectation some grand Christian ideas, indistinctly perceived in many cases, yet ideas of truth struggling for development, and endeavoring to shake off the influences which have kept them down, and prevented the human mind from perceiving their beauty or feeling their power. One such idea, fairly brought out to light, puts a people in advance of the position which they formerly occupied; not indeed that it makes them any more Christian than they were before, but that it renders them more accessible to Christian influence, as it breaks down barriers and removes obstacles which before seemed insurmountable.

All great changes in the world's past history have been preceded by similar indications. We think, if time permitted us to do so, we might show, from the most authentic records, that not only has every advance of the human mind been preceded by distinct intimations, but has been secured by means of some Christian idea, which, gaining the ascendency, has wrought the change. The worth of individual man, when fully brought out and distinctly apprehended, did not more certainly put an end to the feudal system, with its appendages of serfdom and vassalage, than did another idea, connected with this and springing from it,—personal responsibleness, and of course the right of private judgment,—work out those results which astonished the world at the time of the Reformation; and in all these cases of change and revolutions, there were those who never lived to see them, by whom they were nevertheless most distinctly anticipated.

There has been always something very remarkable in these

preparatives or indications of changes to which we have alluded. Naturally we should suppose that if any Christian truth is to make new advances in the world, we must search for the indications of its coming triumphs among those by whom that truth has already been received, and by whom it is best understood. And unquestionably this supposition is correct when we look at the subject in detail, at revival and progress in particular spheres or places, where we necessarily build our hope on the proximate causes of progress, in the piety and effort of Christians themselves; but when we look at things on a larger scale, and consider the general scheme of Providence in reference to the final triumph of Christianity, it is very different. If we do not wholly overlook these proximate causes, we expect to see indications of movement and change in other directions. When a dark storm-cloud broods over the earth, we fix our eye not upon the spot where it seems to be the least heavy, but where it seems to be blackest, for the first streak of light which indicates a clearing. When the Spirit of God brooded over the dark face of the waters, there came life, and light, and order; and over the ruins of this moral creation must the same Spirit move in his work of reformation, and in the darkest places of the earth we shall see some of the first breakings of that light which is to go on, constantly increasing, until the perfect day of the Son of man.

This is one of the striking characteristics of the present times, that the signs of hope and omens of promise for the Church of God are seen in the darkest places, in the breaking up of systems which have stood in the way of the triumphs of truth, and in those changes which put the human mind in a posture to receive that truth. Nor do we discern these signs of the times solely in the political horizon,—the moral firmament is likewise full of them. It is the peculiarity of our age, as it has not been of any age which has preceded it, that every existing form of idolatry and superstition and false religion seems to be worn out, and there appears to be no new form of general error rising up to take their place. It has never been so before. Casting our minds back over the history of centuries, superstitious systems of idolatry have

had fast hold upon the human mind; or, if any of them have been shaken, it has been by the power of some new and more vigorous superstition, which has been ready to take its place and assume its relinquished dominion. But it is so no longer. The nations of the earth are now brought fully and distinctly into view. We know them all,—what they are, what is their position, their circumstances, their customs and habits, and their religion. Our knowledge of this kind is not only extensive in its range, but intimate and particular in its character; and justifies the remark already made, that every form of superstition and false religion has passed its zenith, and rapidly hastens to its setting. I do not know of any reasonable or plausible exception to this general statement. If there is one, it must be in reference to Hindooism, which at the present time shows more strength than any other form of idolatrous superstition; and yet this system, which holds enslaved about half of the population of the globe, presents to the careful observer the most unequivocal evidences of the infirmities of age. No religion can maintain an ascendency any farther or any longer than it maintains its hold upon the passions of the mind. The moment it ceases to be a matter of feeling, and becomes one of custom, its days are numbered. Where is the life and fire and spirit of Hindooism, as it now presents itself to the attention? What is there remaining to sustain the power and support the authority of the Brahmin, but the law of caste and the prevalence of a false philosophy, which are every day losing their influence, as they yield gradually but surely to the superior light and influence of Christian civilization?

So far as China is concerned, it has not now, it has not had for centuries, any religion, as a matter of the heart; it is a thing of state, or a mere customary appendage to the general economy of society. It lies like a corpse reduced to ashes, which, because undisturbed, may retain the original form of the body; but which, when once touched by the breath of heaven, is scattered. Break up the civil institutions of this wonderful empire, change its customs and usages,—and the signs of this breaking up and change are every year becom-

ing more numerous and striking,—and there will be no religion left.

There was a time too when the false prophet of Mecca subsidized to the advancement of his system the power and intelligence of the Asiatic nations. To his superior wisdom and that of his successors, Arabia, and Persia, and Asia yielded, and Islamism triumphed over the religion of the worshipers of the sun and moon and stars; but it has passed its manhood, and is fast verging to the close of life. In its every aspect, civil, political, and religious, Mohammedanism seems to be a worn-out thing, requiring external supports to sustain it, and ready at any shock to give up the ghost.

It is not much different with the gigantic superstition of the West. The thunders of the Vatican are scarcely heard, certainly they have lost their power to terrify. She who once put her foot upon the necks of kings, now moves at the bidding of those she once enslaved, and flies for help to those who once laid their crowns at her feet. It is indeed maintained in some quarters, that the power of Romanism to accomplish its purposes is as great as ever; but where is the evidence? A strong and athletic constitution will generally in the hour of dissolution exhibit violent muscular spasms; and we may cheerfully concede that there is that about Romanism which predicts a by no means easy death,—which seems to indicate that it will not give up life without the most desperate struggles and throes, world-wide in their influence; and there are now these very marks of dissolution about her, signs of the ebbing out of life. Where is now the living energy of Romanism, as a religious system? Not in the heart! The region of the Tiber, the immediate vicinity of the Vatican, is not the seat of its life and energy. The heart beats but feebly; and surely you will not find its resources amid the Italian skepticism of the north, the mysticism of German philosophy, the farcical acting of France, or the licentiousness of more southern Europe! Where are its sources of vigor and the elements of its strength? And what is Romanism now, as a political system, but a creature kept in being by surrounding powers, for purposes of state, to

be certainly dropped and cast aside the moment any change occurs which will render her existence useless?

And while all these false religions and superstitions are fast wearing out, giving evidences of the infirmities of age and omens of approaching dissolution, where is there any one commanding form of error which appears ready to rise and take their place? The only religion at the present moment in our world which has any signs of life and vigor about it, any of the elements of progress, is the simple religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If all other systems depart, this must take their place; for the human mind must have a religion of some kind, and nothing but this remains. I am aware that there are those who, in view of the facts upon which we have been dwelling, reach very different conclusions. They seem to consider the apparent decay of all existing superstitions as an evidence of a general tendency to universal skepticism, and they predict a turbulent, horrid reign of some grand atheistic system, which will sweep away with one breath, not only all that is false, but all that is true likewise. Such a system however is manifestly impossible, because man can never get rid of the constitution which God has given him. There is a secret witness for God in every breast which never can be destroyed, however for a time its testimony may be suppressed; and no system of Atheism or bald Infidelity has ever yet in this world secured anything more than a very brief ascendency. While man remains man, he must have a religion of some kind to meet the demands of his spiritual nature, as he must have nourishment of some kind to sustain his physical system. Atheism can no more meet the wants of the mind than air can sustain animal life. There can be therefore no such thing as a general reign of Atheistic terror.

In throwing out these views, we do not wish to make the impression that the conversion of the world to God is a very easy enterprise. We do not mean to say that the nations of the world are beginning to show signs of a preparation to embrace Christianity. But, if we may look upon it as a fixed fact that this world is to be converted, if the promise of God's Word puts this matter past all doubt, then to the believer in this prom-

ise the present state of the world is full of interest, as tending to strengthen faith, give vigor to hope, and energy to effort. If the gospel is certainly to triumph, the likelihood of its triumph is greater now than it ever has been, because opposing influences are becoming weaker, and every effort we put forth must tell with greater effect, because the resisting force is so much less. Who doubts that there is more hope of the triumph of the gospel in China now than there was a century since,—more hope for Turkey now than in the days of Mahomet's immediate successors,—more hope for Italy than in the days of Leo X.,—more hope for our Southern continent than in the days of Torquemada?

I do not think that any man who loves his Saviour, and the great object for which his Saviour died, can take a general survey of the world, from any elevated and commanding position, without being deeply affected, as he observes the striking contrast between the past and the present. Let him take the fact that but little more than a third of a century since, there was scarcely a spot in heathen lands where a Christian missionary could set his foot, and place it beside this fact, that there is now scarcely a spot where he may not plant the standard of the cross; let him see how the strong intrenchments of heathenism and idolatry and false religion have been giving way with a rapidity almost incredible; let him see the world, not in the light of prophecy merely, but in the light of fact also, converted into a field for Christian effort, and he cannot avoid the conviction that Providence has been busy in the sphere assigned to it, doing its peculiar and appointed work, in subserviency to the great purpose of the cross of Christ, and that some grand crisis is near at hand, as the result of the wonderful changes which are so rapidly taking place, and the events, so remarkable, which are crowding upon each other in such quick succession.

I am greatly mistaken, moreover, if there are not within the Church of Christ itself, certainly within the range of her immediate action and influence, signs perfectly correspondent to those beyond her immediate sphere, upon which we have been dwelling. It is a common maxim that every particular conjuncture of circumstances has a class

of men suited to itself,—men who are drawn out and whose characters are developed by the emergencies of the times. I believe it to be true. God usually accomplishes his purposes through human agency, and when he has a work to do, he raises up instruments fit for that work. In accordance with his revealed arrangements, his Church is to be the great instrument for the conversion of the world; and where there are marked providential developments, we look for a corresponding spirit and line of action in the Church. We should have very little confidence in any surmises drawn from external appearances, if there were no manifestations of an internal according spirit and movement. Now we utter nothing but what every man and woman in Christendom feels, when we say that the present is a time not only of very general but of very sanguine expectation in the Church of God. Even the dreams of visionaries, and theorizers, and speculators, are not without their meaning. As constituting good grounds or rules of action, they may be utterly worthless, and dangerous in their influence; but as evincing the state of the public mind, they are invaluable. The increased attention to the study of the prophecies, the many plans of interpretation which have been given to the world, and the different results which have been reached, some of them I admit very wild and fanciful, all mean something,—they indicate at least a posture of expectation. In this respect the state of things is precisely such as we should look for when any great changes are to take place.

And then if we come within the circle of sober thought and rational movement, we discover indications no less striking. The same Providence which has been and is preparing the way for the triumphs of the gospel, is also preparing his Church for the part she is to act in achieving those triumphs. The change which has passed over the face of the world is no greater than the change which has passed over the face of the Church. A missionary spirit, unknown before, has come to be characteristic of the age in which we live; not indeed that the spirit of Christ's people in this respect corresponds in earnestness, or the means they expend in amount, or the efforts they put forth in energy, to the obligations which their

Master in his providence has imposed upon them,—but I am speaking of the present as contrasted with the past. I take as a general illustration the missionary institution with which most of us are connected. If forty years since there was scarcely an opening for missionary effort, there was at the same time not an American missionary, nor the means to sustain one; but now we can point you to some hundred and fifty ordained missionaries, five hundred laborers, nearly one hundred missionary stations, some seventy Christian churches, and nearly thirty thousand professed converts in heathen lands, the results of the missionary spirit in one department or branch of the Christian Church. Nor do we believe that this spirit is becoming weaker, but rather stronger. At this very moment there are more hearts than ever to send up to the throne with increasing earnestness the prayer, "Thy kingdom come;" there are more hands engaged in the work, more men to devote themselves personally to the enterprise of spreading the gospel through the world, more means to sustain them within our reach. The influence which in a short time has raised the resources of the Board from one thousand to a quarter of a million of dollars annually has not become inoperative. There are indications, by no means equivocal, of a new spirit of benevolence rising in the Church, a spirit of self-devotement, a spirit which leads men to shape their course and use their means in reference to the great work which God has given his people to do. Even in reference to our own sphere, the circle of our own Christian relationships, the region covered by the Society whose anniversary we celebrate to-night, a comparison of the present with the past will justify all the remarks we have made.

While we are taking this view of our subject, let us not overlook this important thought, that the spirit of the Church of Christ, in this respect, is impressing itself upon the public mind, and giving tone to its sentiment. In evidence, we point you to a rising spirit of antagonism in the very quarters where we should look for its manifestation when the power of Christian influence is decidedly felt. We point you to the fact that missionary movements, which but a few years since were regarded as matters of very little moment, are now

watched with intensest interest; and the plans of the Church of God, as well as the results they are developing, find their way into courts and cabinets and council chambers, to shape political plannings, and give form to political movements. It is so in our own land, it is so in the land of our ancestors; and when we see the power of British and American influence everywhere at work, reaching all nations, inspiring them with new ideas—when we see the probability that the present language of evangelic faith is to be the language of the world, we cannot but hail it as an omen of brightest promise, that these nations, which now confessedly take the lead in the world, are the nations where a pure faith and a missionary spirit prevail, and which themselves feel, in all their deliberations and plans and movements, the influence of this aggressive characteristic of the Church of Christ.

I cannot but think, my brethren, that in reference to the triumphs of the cause of the Redeemer, the day in which we live is one of intensest interest and brightest promise. It seems to be the time of the latter rain, when we are called to an unusual spirit of prayer and devotion, and more than ordinary effort. The providence of God enforces duty no less strongly than the Word of God clearly reveals it. If at all times there is a pressure of responsibility upon the Christian, now in an especial manner ought it to be felt, because in fact it is increasing. It is strictly conformable to all the analogies of things, that now a deeper interest should be taken in the work of Christian missions, leading to the most importunate prayer, the greatest painstaking, and even to sacrifices. Every object of hope or fear increases its influence upon us as we approach it. The racer on the course, as he draws near to the goal upon which his eye has been fixed, and as the prize for which he is contending becomes brighter as well as more distinct, is roused and nerved for almost convulsive effort. All the energies of the human soul are then stirred most effectually, when the plans to which they have been devoted are upon the eve of their successful accomplishment. And so now, when everything indicates the coming triumphs of the gospel, when the gathering clouds seem to portend the latter rain, when everywhere movement is visible among opposing

agencies, but they are movements of retreat, and sounds are heard, but they are sounds of dismay,—now should the Church of Christ, now should every individual Christian feel the weighty responsibility which Providence throws upon the conscience, and be prepared in a spirit of Christian faith, and Christian courage, and Christian fortitude, to meet and discharge it.

A prize which, when fairly within the reach, is not seized, is not usually a second time presented as an object of hopeful effort. Every man has his particular work, and his opportunity for doing it, which, once lost, never returns. Every age has its appropriate object, and an appropriate season for gaining it: failing then, it fails always. I apprehend the analogy holds good in spiritual things, and in reference to the Church of Christ.

When God had brought the children of Israel to the borders of the promised land, and commanded them to go up and possess it, and when, alarmed on account of the dangers before them, and unmoved by the exhortations of Caleb and Joshua, who would have urged them forward, they refused to advance, they had been put upon their trial and failed,—the door was closed against them, and they were driven back into the wilderness, there to wander till that entire generation had passed away, and men of another spirit had arisen to take their places. We do not believe that the promise of God will fail: this world will be brought to the knowledge of the truth, the Church will take possession of the earth in the name of her Master; and it would seem from providential developments as though Christians of the present age were now put upon their trial, and called to go up and take possession of their inheritance. We may fail in the trial, not because we have not sufficient strength and sufficient resources, but because we have not sufficient faith and courage. The Christians of the present day may give an impulse to the cause of missions, which will settle the question of the speedy triumph of the gospel. If they fail, what can we look for but that the purposes of God will to human view be rolled back, every door of usefulness now open be closed, and kept closed till we shall have passed from the stage,

and other Christians, of more faith, more prayer, more self-denying, self-sacrificing effort, shall rise up to carry on the work of God? And when the opportunity shall have passed away, and our unfaithfulness shall re-act upon ourselves in the spiritual mildew and blight which shall rest upon everything around us, we shall have the fulfilment of the prophetic malediction: "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Report of the Secretary.

Another year, the twenty-third in the history of this Society, has passed. By the favoring providence of God no removal has been made among its officers or managers by death or any other cause. The usual yearly income has been realized, as will be seen by the annexed report of the Treasurer. The average of receipts for the last ten years has been $12,064 94. The receipts during the past year have been $14,217 58, showing an increase of $2,152 64.

The monthly meetings for prayer and conference have been regularly held, and the attendance upon them has not materially varied from that of former years.

It does not fall within the proper sphere of this report to present a statement in detail of the condition of particular missionary stations or churches. There are no missionaries in the field sent out under our auspices, nor are there any stations to which the funds raised by this Society are exclusively appropriated; and our incentives to exertion are to be found in our sympathy with the whole missionary enterprise.

As a Society we hold a subordinate relation to the parent institution; but among the many auxiliary associations like our own, we think we stand in a position which not only attracts attention to our example, but which gives great power to it. The amount of funds raised, the number of churches connected with us, and the important locality we occupy, constitute the reason for the distinction we have named. But if this distinction properly belongs to us, then our duties are also peculiar, and our influence must necessarily be great. The tone of the missionary spirit among us must give character to that of other similar organizations. If this Society should realize its responsibilities, should receive from above a new baptism, and develop its very great resources, as the law of the missionary work laid down in the New Testament requires, beyond a question the effect would be to stimulate and enlarge the ability of kindred societies. But if Christians in the focus of missionary enterprise, with ample means, and with the best advantages to form a judgment of the wants of the world, hold up no ensign, raise no cry of warning, make no exertions commensurate with the grandeur or the exigencies of the object, give no impulse to the whole Church by their sacrifices and ever-enlarging gifts, both of laborers and of money,—if this is *our* yearly history, surely we ought not to be surprised at the laggard spirit which seems

to possess the churches generally on this subject. Our position imposes obligations upon us, blindness to which is not only a sin and a shame to ourselves, but it must also inflict a deep injury on the whole cause.

The providence of God, as connected with the world's evangelization, is *in advance* of our practical views and feelings; and while our churches hold about the same relative position to the cause that they did twelve years ago, the movements of the Spirit of God in the missionary field have carried the operations of the Board beyond both our liberality and our prayers, so that even now another embarrassing debt is likely to be reported at the close of the financial year of the Parent Society; and unless a change in the spirit of the churches be speedily effected, disasters which are now only in the imagination of many, will in a very few years be realities.

There are two or three questions which the friends of the American Board ought solemnly to consider and decisively to answer. We have not the space in which fully to discuss them,—we can barely state them; but we trust they will be duly pondered by the members of this Society.

Can the American Board maintain a fixed position, neither advancing nor retrograding, neither enlarging nor restricting its operations? If, as some imagine, it has reached the maximum of its yearly receipts, can it retain the same standard in coming years? To us it appears evident, that if such is to be the policy of the Board—and *such it must be*, if the idea prevails that the limit of receipts has been reached—then they are to undertake a task from which angels would shrink: they are to sustain a policy unsupported by the spirit of the age, by the example of a single sister Society in the land, by the prophecies of the Bible, by the promises of Christ, by the providences of God, by the movements of the Holy Spirit. We know of nothing in nature, in grace, in reason, or in Scripture, that would justify the Board in the attempt to maintain such a policy. We see not how they could undertake it; for they have no power over the Holy Spirit to restrain his blessings either from the missionary stations or from the churches at home, nor can they resist the providences of God urging forward this work. What would such a course be but to fight against God?

And if this stationary policy cannot be carried out, shall a *fluctuating standard* of operations be assumed, a standard that varies from year to year, according to which they shall expand or contract their arrangements? Shall the minds of the Prudential Committee be distracted, and their hearts rent, by statedly planning for the prevention of an increase of blessing abroad, by the dismemberment of mission stations, the withdrawal or the withholding of missionaries from fields that imperatively demand them, the disbanding of schools, or the ruin of whole stations? What a work is this to impose upon men who have been baptized with the spirit of Christ, appointed to superintend the work of American missions in this land and this age of the world!

And if neither a fixed nor a fluctuating standard can be maintained, shall there be a *retrograde movement* in the operations of the Board? Is

there an intelligent child of God, a true lover of Christ and his cause, who would advise or even suggest such a thing? Are there any who think that the Board have been too forward or rapid in their operations, and in advance of the providence of God, and therefore should not only abstain from enlargement, but should at once retrench their expenditures and restrict their plans of operations? We cannot think that there are any such, and we stay not to reason the point.

We come then to the last question proposed. Can and ought the American Board to be sustained in plans corresponding to the spiritual growth and necessities of the missionary stations, and with the palpable intimations of Divine Providence? This undoubtedly is a very serious inquiry; but the answer to it is, in our judgment, exceedingly plain. We take it, that the *Divine, unalterable law* in the missionary enterprise is that of *Progress*. We are abundantly taught in the Scriptures,—by the solemn oath of God, by prophecies, by parables, by commands to the Church,—that the kingdom of Christ is a spreading, augmenting kingdom, which at length is to fill the whole earth; and all our plans and views and hopes, in behalf of this cause, must be in consistency with this great and glorious truth. Any other law than that which God has thus enacted in his Word, is unknown to the Church. As we have seen, a principle that forbids further development and enlargement, or that requires restriction and retrenchment, is not, cannot be of God. Such a policy may be necessitated by the apathy and wickedness of the Church, but it is not to be found in the archives of the kingdom of nature or of grace. No body of men, therefore, having the management of this work, ought to be guided by any other principle, as the law of their actions, than this fundamental principle of *progress*. Nothing but the stubborn rule of a cruel and sinful necessity, brought to bear upon them by the unbelief of the Church, should induce them to swerve from it. They have a right to assume that they are doing the will of God, when planning and acting in accordance with this law of advancement.

The question of obedience to this law of the kingdom of grace, or to that of a cruel and stringent necessity, is one which we conceive must at the present time weigh oppressively upon the minds of the Prudential Committee and the members of the Board. Planning and acting for coming ages and a dying race, and representing so large a part of the Church of Christ, we do not wonder that they regard this cause with the eye of faith, and with the heart of hope. We cannot but honor them for believing, and acting upon the belief, that the cause will be extricated from its embarrassments, and be nobly progressive in the future.

But the responsibility of the final answer to this question does not rest with the Board, but with the auxiliary Societies, with the churches, and the individual members composing them; and in some way or other, it must be brought home to these individual hearts and consciences. If this is not done—if the churches still refuse to go forward—then, so far as we can see, the noble faith and noble plans of the Board must be disappointed

If the views presented in the earlier part of this Report, in regard to the position and influence of this Society, are correct, this is a question which *we* pre-eminently should ponder and answer.

As a Society, feeling this responsibility, it behooves us to use every practicable means to secure the more enlarged, systematic, and general co-operation of the members of the churches connected with this Society. There is reason to suppose that less than one half of the communicants in our churches contribute anything to this cause.

We do not suggest any plan to be adopted for securing this object. We have merely endeavored to present some of the considerations which should induce the Society to act, and to act efficiently, in the impending emergency of the cause of missions; and may God guide and succeed us in our efforts.

THOMAS H. SKINNER, JR., *Corresponding Secretary.*

Receipts of the Society.

The following statement, prepared by the Treasurer, exhibits the receipts of the Foreign Missionary Society of New-York and Brooklyn, from its organization in 1827:—

From 1827 to April, 1836, (nine years,)	$86,931 28
For the year ending April, 1837,	19,068 72
" " " 1838,	11,195 53
" " March, 1839,	12,433 07
" " April, 1840,	10,131 83
" " March, 1841,	11,721 17
" " April, 1842,	15,937 73
" " " 1843,	10,432 42
" " " 1844,	14,018 10
" " " 1845,	11,974 88
" " " 1846,	10,425 10
" " March, 1847,	9,867 59
" " " 1848,	11,834 70
" " April, 1849,	19,536 56
" " " 1850,	14,217 58
Total in twenty-three years,	$269,725 76

J. W. TRACY, *Treasurer.*

New-York, April 6th, 1850.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF NEW-YORK & BROOKLYN,

AUXILIARY TO THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

ADOPTED JULY 1st, 1850.

ARTICLE I.

This Society shall be composed of the members of the several churches and Foreign Missionary Associations of New-York and Brooklyn, and of others who may make payments directly to its Treasury; and shall be called the Foreign Missionary Society of New-York and Brooklyn, auxiliary to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

ARTICLE II.

The objects of this Society shall be to disseminate missionary intelligence, and to raise funds in aid of the missions under the care of the Parent Society.

ARTICLE III.

The officers of the Society shall be a President, four Vice Presidents, a Corresponding Secretary, a Recording Secretary, a Treasurer, and two Directors from each of the churches which contribute regularly to its Treasury; who together shall constitute the Board of Managers, any seven of whom shall form a quorum for the transaction of business. The pastor of each church co-operating shall be ex officio a Vice President and member of the Board.

ARTICLE IV.

The President, or in his absence or inability to act, one of the Vice Presidents, shall preside at every meeting of the Society and of the Board; the Secretaries shall discharge the duties usually devolving on those officers; the Treasurer shall receive all funds contributed to the Society, and after deducting incidental expenses, shall pay over the same from time to time to the Treasurer, or duly authorized agent of the Parent Society, and make a report at the annual meeting.

ARTICLE V.

It shall be the duty of the Board of Managers to procure the circulation of missionary intelligence, and by all appropriate means to awaken interest, and elicit prayer and action in the churches, in behalf of the cause of missions.

ARTICLE VI.

It shall be the duty of the Directors in each church to do all in their power to enlist all the members of the church and congregation in the missionary work, and to take measures, if practicable, to secure systematic and regular contributions to the funds of this Society, from their respective churches and Sabbath-schools.

ARTICLE VII.

The Board of Managers shall appoint from their number annually three Standing Committees, whose duty it shall be to advise and consult with the Board of Managers, and particularly with the Directors in each of the churches, as to the most efficient mode of promoting the objects of this Society in their respective churches. One of these Committees shall attend to this duty in the churches *east*, another in the churches *west* of Broadway, to 14th street, and thence west of the 4th Avenue, in the city of New-York, and the other in the churches in the cities of Brooklyn and Williamsburg. These Committees shall report their proceedings to the Board from time to time, at their discretion, or when required to do so; and it shall be their duty to consider and suggest to the Board any measures that may occur to them by which to increase the efficiency of the Society, and augment its receipts.

ARTICLE VIII.

The Society shall hold a meeting for prayer, and to receive and impart missionary intelligence, on the afternoon of the first Monday in each month, at such time and place as shall be fixed by the Board of Managers.

ARTICLE IX.

The Board of Managers shall hold quarterly meetings in each year, on the first Monday of January, April, July, and October. Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the President and Secretaries.

ARTICLE X.

The Society shall hold an annual meeting at such time and place as they shall apppoint.

ARTICLE XI.

The officers of the Society shall be elected at the first monthly meeting after the annual meeting.

LIST OF OFFICERS

FOR THE YEAR 1850.

PRESIDENT.

JASPER CORNING.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

ANSON G. PHELPS, | JOHN A. DAVENPORT,
WILLIAM C. GILLMAN, | DAVID HOADLEY.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

Rev. THOMAS H. SKINNER, Jr.

RECORDING SECRETARY.

ALMON MERWIN.

TREASURER.

J. W. TRACY.

DIRECTORS.

Allen street Presbyterian Church,.... M. T. Hewit, Edward Chapin.
Bleecker street " " .... Charles N. Talbot, Alfred C. Post.
Brainerd " " .... Joseph Brewster, Wm. A. Booth.
Brick " " .... A. L. Ely, H. Holden.
Broadway Tabernacle " .... S. Pitts, W. G. West.
Central Presbyterian " .... Winthrop S. Gilman, Stephen M. Chester
Church of the Puritans,..... O. E. Wood, John Wiley.
Duane street Presbyterian Church,.... C. E. Pierson, Wm. Walker.
Eastern Congregational " .... Stephen Cutter, Lewis Chichester.
Eleventh Presbyterian " .... J. E. Marshall, E. B. Littell.
Hammond st. Congregational " .... Tredwell Ketchum, Jeremiah Baker.
Harlem Presbyterian " .... E. Ketchum, James Riker, Jr.
Houston street " " .... E. H. Burger, Wm. H. Little.
Mercer street " " .... J. B. Sheffield, Anson G. Phelps, Jr.
Pearl street " " .... Hugh Aikman, F. H. Bartholomew.
Presb. Church on University Place,... J. K. Myers, H. K. Bull.

Sixth street Presbyterian Church,	W. E. Dodge, B. B. Atterbury.
Seventh " "	Alexander Milne, James H. White.
Spring street " "	R. H. Noydine, James G. Barber.
Tenth " "	J. F. Joy, L. E. Jackson.
Thirteenth street " "	J. N. Danforth, Dan Knight.
West " "	A. D. F. Randolph, Abraham L. Earle.

Bedford Cong. Church, Brooklyn,	D. O. Caulkins, Edward T. Goodall.
Bridge st. " " "	H. W. Ripley, Thomas M. Sother.
Central Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn,	Charles C. Mudge, Jno. Morris.
Clinton Ave. Cong. " "	S. Davenport, Mark H. Newman.
Church of the Pilgrims, "	Charles J. Stedman, G. C. Burnap.
First Presbyterian Church, "	Alfred Edwards, Henry Redfield.
Plymouth " "	J. Tasker Howard, H. C. Bowen.
Second Presbyterian " "	Erastus O. Tompkins, Charles Clarke.
South " " "	Jno. Rankin, Walter S. Griffith.
Third " " "	W. W. Hurlbut, Joseph Howard.

First Presb. Church, Williamsburg,	Paul J. Fish.

3.

Christianity: Its Destined Supremacy on the Earth.

A SERMON,

PREACHED APRIL 6, AND 13, 1851,

BEFORE

THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN.

BY

RICHARD S. STORRS, JR.,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMS, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.

NEW YORK:

ALMON MERWIN, 150 NASSAU STREET.

1851.

New York:
S. W. Benedict, Print.,
16 Spruce street.

SERMON.

HEBREWS 10: 13.

FROM HENCEFORTH EXPECTING TILL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE HIS FOOTSTOOL.

The Being presented by this inspired declaration is Jesus, the Christ. Who he is, and what are his relations to God and to the Universe, we learn very clearly from the Epistle which contains it. This was written to strengthen the Hebrew Christians in the efforts they were to make, and to guard them from the perils to which they were exposed, through the contrast of Christianity with the established Judaism; of its bareness and spirituality with the magnificence of that, of its seeming novelty with the venerable ancestral antiquity of that. It was written, as concurrent evidences from within and from without conspire to show, by that apostle who had seen the very glory of Christ on the way to Damascus; around whom it had shined, as a brightness out of Heaven; who, from that time forth, had confessed and proclaimed the Messiahship of Jesus, and had been conscious of a love for him perhaps more mighty and transforming than ever before had mastered and sublimed so powerful a soul;—a love to which no trial seemed severe, no difficulty great, no labor arduous; which was full of praises, sweet delights, and exulting anticipations; and which has wrought itself into expression in passages among the sublimest in human speech. The Epistle, so designed and so written, treats naturally of Christ. He is its first and central figure. It presents him in each most important relation. It constitutes, in the aggregate,

so noble an expression of the truths that concern him, that to no other part of the Scriptures can we turn for another more vivid or more full.

Christ is presented by the apostle as a Divine Being; exalted above Moses, the priests, and the angels; by whom the worlds and the heavens were made; who hath been from eternity; who is sovereign, and immutable. Yet he is equally a human being. He hath taken upon him the seed of Abraham. He hath been tempted even as we are, although without sin; and hath been made perfect, in his office, through the ministry of suffering. Humanity and Divinity are thus united in Christ. The one does not ascend above our aspiration. The other does not descend from the glory of God's eternal sovereignty. Yet the sympathy of the finite and the majesty of the Infinite are wondrously combined, and a mediator is provided between God and man. This Being is presented to us as now enthroned, above Principalities and Powers, at the right hand of God. He hath been upon the earth, hath introduced among men a system of pardon and moral renovation, and now he hath passed through death into Glory. He there ever liveth, to make intercession. In his wonderful personality, uniting the Divine with the human constitution—after his amazing and unparalleled experience, of the endurance unto death, of resurrection and ascension—as the Head of the system which represents him among men,—he abideth henceforth in the presence of God. He there awaits the extension through the earth of his spiritual kingdom.

It is the last truth, especially, which the text brings to view. "From henceforth expecting,"—awaiting, that is, calmly looking forward to the time of its accomplishment—"till his enemies be made his footstool." The image of the apostle is noticeably emphatic. Taken obviously from the antique custom, of which so many memorials are preserved on the sculptures and reliefs that abound in the East, which Joshua accepted when he and his captains put their feet upon the necks of the five conquered kings, which was easily familiar to that primitive state where

actions are the most vivid symbols of thought—the custom of placing the foot upon the vanquished, to denote the completeness of their subjection—it does not imply vindictiveness in Christ, or even that his conquest shall be other than moral; but it presents the truth most clearly, with the luminous distinctness of a star shining sharply on the front of the heavens, that the forces which he has brought to the earth, of which he is the life, which he administers, are to triumph among men; and that he, in heaven, awaits the event. To express it more exactly: CHRISTIANITY—the system of Truth and Grace and Life, revealed through Christ and consummated in him, by which he now acts on our Race—IS TO GAIN COMPLETE SUPREMACY AMONG MEN. It is to subdue to its allegiance all tribes on earth. This is the truth I ask you to consider.

My Friends, what *is* Christianity? what is its import? its purpose? its power? A few words will express it.

Christianity is, for the first thing, a system of Truth. Coming to us from the infinite God, it brings to us the knowledge and the thoughts of its Author. It expresses, therefore, the sublimest realities within the range of human inquiry. It shows us truth concerning the Deity, his being and his character; concerning Eternity, and the separate scenes there of recompense and reward; concerning the Soul, its character, its duration, its relations to God and to his moral government; concerning the spiritual systems which spread in majesty about God's throne, with which we now are distantly connected, with which we shall be intimately associated hereafter; especially concerning Christ, his nature, his character, and the offices he fulfills. The religious truths that are inferrible by us, from the structures of Nature, or from the indications and prophecies of our moral constitution, Christianity brings to light with altogether new vividness; exhibiting them in their proportions and relations, superceding argument by divine authority, and driving away doubt before the certainty of faith. Other truths she reveals, which Philosophy has not guessed. The incarnation of Deity in Jesus, redemption

through him, sanctification by the Spirit, the Trinity in God which is the basis of these realities—analysis has never evolved these from the mechanisms of the creation. "The depth saith, it is not in me; and the sea saith, it is not with me." No argument has constructed the ladders that reach them. No soaring intuition, even, of a kindled imagination, has risen to apprehend their transcendent disclosures. But Christianity reveals them; as old as God's purposes in their outward reality, though as fresh as the morning in their address to man.

It is a system, too, of Precept, and of moral instruction. It brings to human consciences the law of God; the law which pervades his spiritual creation as gravitation the material, requiring obedience from every Intelligence, securing the blessedness of all who obey it, an object of infinite love to Jehovah. It shows this law in both its requirement and its penalty. It incorporates it completely in the history of Jesus, and so exhibits its relations to life. It runs its sharp and definite line along the wavering edge of custom. It applies it to affairs, as a guide and a measure. It sheds sublime illustration upon it, from the revelation of that world where the noblest intelligences continually obey it; where God abides, in love and glory; where the permanent state is one of Joy.—As a system, therefore, of moral instruction, this takes precedence of every other. It developes a rule above the maxims of human ethics. It presents that rule with a faithful distinctness, invests it with an authority, and ascribes to it a permanence, to which the codes of men are strangers.

Yet further, Christianity is the offer to men of pardon before God, and of Divine favor, for reasons, upon conditions. Its historic narrative is the record of redemption, accomplished by Christ; of his humiliation in our behalf; his obedience, ministry and death; his resurrection, unto glory. Through these are wrought atonement for sin; a mighty and durable basis of pardon. The gospel reveals this. Upon condition of the acceptance of Christ by the soul, God offers it justification, and reception

to his favor. He offers it more. Admission to his kingdom, the reception of his Spirit, communion with himself, participation in his knowledge, the unutterable happiness conferred by his love, the entire and sweet repose of affection exalted yet satisfied in him, the boundless and sublime freedom that comes with acquiescence in the will of the Infinite, the exultant and interminable progress of Heaven, heirship with Christ to the forces, the enjoyments and the dominions of God—all these are promised to those who receive redemption in the Son. God promises Himself! We shall not only be "sons" and "heirs" of God. We shall be partakers of the divine nature. We know not what we shall be, but we shall be like God; seeing him as he is. We shall be filled with all the fulness of God. The language of earth fails fully to utter these mysteries of glory. It staggers beneath the wealth of the heavenly revelations. What heathen apotheosis has poorly simulated, these show as real and perfectly attainable. What no aspiring desire in its loftiest flight has dared to deem possible, they offer to all on condition of faith. On the ground of acceptance, established in the cross, illustrated in the ascension, recorded in the Gospel, and ever symbolised in the ordinance of the supper, they offer to man the felicity of the Godhead!

Again, and for the last thing, Christianity is a system of spiritual and Divine force; for the renovation of the moral nature, and its purification. The influences of its truth, its maxims, and its promises, of course bear upon this. They conduce to its accomplishment by a law as direct as that which developes the germ into its flower. Allow them to operate on any unperverted and awakened susceptibility, and they will clothe it in purity and shed throughout it the spirit of peace. But these are not the chief pressures that Christianity brings to act upon character. It presents to us, also, the Spirit of God, in his Divine and personal energy. It is the casket, we may say, within which that energy resides, and from which when it is opened that passes to the aroused and receptive heart. Rather, it is the medium of

transmission, touching the earth yet reaching to it from Heaven, along which the quickening power of God is imparted to the soul. Through Christianity, the same Divine Spirit who touched and inspired the ancient Prophets, who was perfectly and always expressed in Jesus, breathes now into the heart, to enlighten it with knowledge and to kindle within it the purest affection. This power is necessary to its vital renovation. It has been joyfully experienced by many; has been the source, indeed, of all the piety that has illustrated history. It enters the soul with a force from the infinite fountain of sanctity. It imbues it with holy and elevating love. It brings invisible things to its view, and makes the earth and the heavens resplendent before it with the grace and the majesty of a manifest God. Christianity is the medium through which it comes to us.

As a system, therefore, this is entire. It is supreme among systems. It transcends others by the royalty of its nature. It is complete, and they are imperfect. It is simple in its requirement, yet pure and celestial; they are cumbrous in requisition, and still fall short of demanding holiness. It exhibits man's sinfulness, and declares God's holiness, yet promises pardon on one condition; they deny man's sinfulness, and degrade God's holiness, yet leave no visible basis of hope. It underlies the writings of many men, gathered up in the Scriptures; has had ages for its development, and broad lands and numerous nations for the scene of that development; and yet it is perfectly harmonious and symmetric, from first to last, and lacks no element of entire completeness. They have been usually the products of one mind, are local and narrow, and still involve contradictions. It has God for its author, and so transcends the world and Time. They are born of man's skill, and share his mutability. In its fulness, in its greatness, in its indwelling life, this is alone in the world.

And this system is to reach supremacy in the earth; to be enthroned among all nations. We are to look at the reasons for anticipating this.

I. In the first place, my Hearers, *the very fact that God has established it, and that He has introduced it to human knowledge*, should lead us to expect this. I do not say, It proves this. We cannot reason with absolute confidence from what we know of God to what his procedures in history will be. We do not enter fully enough for this into the mind of the Holiest. We do not apprehend broadly enough the elements and the exigencies of that Universal System which all depends on God for guidance, amid which his every action is performed, and through which its relations and influences spread. The Angel standing in the Sun could not do this. For us to attempt it—to adopt the fine image of Edward Irving, 'it were as if the little blind mole, running his tiny galleries under the ground, should attempt to comprehend the marchings and countermarchings of the army above him.' Yea more than this! It were the finite reaching out to grasp the Infinite.

But though we may not reason with *assurance* from what God is, or from what he has done, to what he designs to accomplish in the Future, there are presumptions suggested which we cannot put aside, concerning his action and the course of events. And there is no such presumption more definite or impressive, or more immediate, than this: that the system of truth and salvation in Christ, which God has prepared and has given to men, shall advance among them to ultimate supremacy. That God will choose to accomplish this, it seems difficult to doubt. That he is able to effect it, cannot be questioned. Whatever we conceive is possible to Him. Eternity is open at once before him, and he seeth the end and the beginning together. The wrath of man, therefore, he makes to praise him. The remainder of wrath he fixedly restrains. In the courses of the Past he has wonderfully wrought the results which he had chosen, and which beforehand he had shown to his children. Amid the utmost confusions of history, without the intervention of angelic embassies, or armies blazing in celestial panoply, through simply the superintending control of Providence, his purposes have come to his-

toric reality, at just the point allotted for them, as gently as the morning arises over hills; as lightly as the flower blushes out upon its stalk. The central and harmonizing line in history, is that on which these plans have advanced. All history besides converges toward that, is interpreted in its radiance; and whatsoever that looked towards has been fulfilled.—If such then is God's control over history, and if such has been the accomplishment of his plans, we look to see Christianity successful. It breaks in abruptly on the course of his procedure, if this is to fail.

The presumption is strengthened, too, when we consider the system; how wonderful it is, how much God has given it to make it complete. His knowledge is in it; his precepts; his vast provision for pardon and for renewal; the sublimest revelation conceivable of himself. There are mysteries of truth brought to utterance through it, concerning the Divine personality and Being, which it would almost seem have never elsewhere been shown so fully. The angels themselves, it is suggested by the Scriptures, desire to look into them. There are resources of grace and of spiritual power assembled in the system, and distributed through it, which show the express developement of Omnipotence. The manifestation of God, the atoning death of Messiah, the personal influences of the Holy Ghost, these give it its reality. More than Nature or than Providence, they illustrate the character and the power of the Infinite. Throughout the system his glory shines. The earth itself takes new sublimity, becomes exalted to new associations, in the presence of this. We presume then, again, on its final success.

Still further must we presume this, when we remember through what processes it was brought to developement, and to general proclamation;—how vast these were, and how full of sublimity. God showed it afar, remember, to the beings who had fallen; and the beauty of his promise stamped the bow upon the cloud that hung thunderous over them. From that time his purpose came ever into plainer and larger exhibition. It was shown to the Patri-

archs, to the Lawgiver, to the Psalmists. It quickened with a celestial hope the thoughts and hearts of many elect men. It gradually worked on to realization in the actual, through the pressure and clamor of national histories. It subdued and reorganized other movements and agencies. It came into clear prospective manifestation in the ecstasy of the prophets. It was at last accomplished, in the advent of Christ, his ministry and passion, his death and his ascension.—Through all this course, of four thousand years, there was never a point where God was not moving to bring this system to completeness. He touched the troubled currents of national progress with the sublime baptism of his presence and guidance, that they might bear Redemption forward. He shed upon lofty and purified souls the unspeakable brightness of his Omniscience; he carried nations into captivity, and brought them up again with shoutings; he raised up kings, and suddenly overthrew them; he established a theocracy and a priesthood at Jerusalem; he opened the waves of the eager sea, until they stood as a wall on each hand; he made the Syrian sands brilliant beneath the march of the pillar by night; he descended upon Sinai, till it trembled and rocked, through its every granite crag, under the majesty of Infinitude;—ALL, that in its time Redemption might be unfolded! And when we meet the heavenly hosts, singing exulting chants above Bethlehem, adorning the midnight with their sweet beauty and filling it with their rapture, we find in even that no strangeness. The history that precedes it has prepared for such a close.

It is not probable, then, that a system like this, so associated with God, so sublime in itself, introduced with such patience of purpose and of aim, along a path so brilliant with theophanies, is to fail of success. Rather, as we look on, we predict its supremacy. If the presumption does not arise to proof, it is almost because it supercedes that, that this will triumph, throughout the earth.

II. But again, in the second place: *The interior structure of*

Christianity, its fitnesses to man, the reply which it gives to his deepest demands, also promise this Supremacy.

How is it that the system gains a hold upon any man, who is thoughtful and intelligent? It is opposed, of course, by his native disposition to self-idolatry; for it requires the entire surrender of this, in devotion to God. It is obstructed in its appeal by the business and the pleasures that attract him elsewhere; by the often intricate and broad contexture of affairs in which he is engaged. How then does it gain its mastery over him? It does it by virtue of its inherent force and applicability to himself, and by virtue of the personal Divine influence which accompanies and rays from it. It does it through its appeal to something in him, which may move him to action. It binds his understanding, for example, with the stress of its argument; and so, sometimes, it leads him to Christ. It appeals to his inward consciousness of unrest, and offers him peace unspeakable in God. It kindles within him the sense of sin, and so of exposure and of judgment to come; and then it offers him Christ in Atonement, with his fulness of expiation, with the promises of God surrounding his cross, and the gates into heaven swinging inward at his touch. Through the perfect embodiment of excellence in Jesus, it appeals to that inmost susceptibility to moral beauty which almost never is dead in any heart. Through its warnings it speaks to fear. Through its revelations of God, it addresses the sense of dependence in us, the capacity for veneration and the sense of the sublime, as well as the conviction of moral obligation. Through its many great and precious promises, it excites and justifies ardent desire. There is not one susceptibility within us, which is innocent and appropriate as a spring of endeavor, to which the system does not appeal. It tries every rivet in the armor with its force. It sheds its dew and light on every spot that may be made to bloom with verdure. It touches every chord of sensibility, if any one may vibrate in response. It addresses each power that God has placed in us. And so, at length, it enters the heart. Being full of force at every point, being framed into the subtlest adaptation to man's necessi-

ties, being accompanied by the grace and the might of God's Spirit, it overcomes the will and wins to itself belief. How often has this been illustrated before us!

And when Christianity has thus entered the soul, it establishes and maintains its supremacy therein, through the same Divine fitness to every power. It addresses the intellectual nature, for example. It gives it the noblest truth that can be proffered; truth that it cannot comprehend in its forms and reduce to its expression, yet that more than any other attracts and rewards study. It states that truth in every variety of aspect and relation. It interweaves it with records; or makes it shine, as light through the rose-leaf, through the flush of hope and the beauty of action. It makes effort needful, and thoughtfulness, for its apprehension. Yet it states it most clearly. It affirms it with an authority that furnishes a stable support for inquiry. It incites to the study of it by the vast importance which is shown to pertain to it. And when the mind has become weary with such greatness, it brings to it also the simplest principles, in the most charming forms of parable or of song. So every way the system of Christ meets the human intelligence. There is not an appetency or a capacity of this power which it does not address. The understanding, the imagination, the fancy, even, and the taste for the beautiful in form, to all it holds a normal relation. It contradicts no true philosophy, but anticipates and involves every principle in such. It opposes no science, but interprets each; grounds its laws and their phenomena in an eternal reality, and harmonizes them all in the wisdom of God. It is a spirit of truth; that illustrates and reconciles all departments of knowledge, while with its own force it fills each capacity, and quickens it anew. We may go out on the view of it to the splendor and height of the Throne of the Universe, to the shores of that infinitude of truth which we shall forever be exploring in Heaven; and yet we may rest upon it, elsewhere, as on the familiar and obvious axiom.

So it addresses the conscience, and the sense of obligation.

The apprehension of a Right which is immutable and universal, which binds with its authority every moral intelligence, and unites into one the vast spiritual systems—an apprehension which seems bedded indelibly in every moral being, which finds obscure expression even in heathenisms, and which gives all efficiency but of force to human government and law—this the system of Christ alone perfectly meets; revealing the law of universal Love, established permanently throughout God's system. That sense of sin, too, and of peril before this law, which leads to all manner of religious observances, to the endurance of every most terrible penance, that innocence may be reached or God propitiated, to this it ministers with entire efficiency. It does not crush it. It does not overlook it. It accepts it as just, and developes it more vividly. But it directs it to the cross, with the vicarious suffering thereon endured; a suffering which God appointed and accepted as the ground of forgiveness, before which the heavens were dark and dumb and the earth was heaved with a strange terror, yet through which God's holiness was declared to the universe, and in which forgiveness is pledged to the penitent. The most intensely aroused conscience can conceive of no law more pure than God's. The most thoroughly startled and trembling conscience can ask no atonement more ample than Christ's.

So, equally, to the affectionate and emotive nature inherent in man, Christianity appeals. Presenting God to us, as no other system does, in the beauty of that holiness through which love beams, in the majesty of that power which wisdom directs, in the grandeur even of that eternal glory which is all made visible and personal to us in Jesus, it offers the object for our purest affection. It brings him to us through the beautiful biographies of a human life. It appeals to our love from the level of equality, even while it shadows the heart with the mystery of God.—So it addresses the sensibility to joy, to hope, to perfect repose of soul in confidence and faith. There is not one constitutional power implanted in us, there is not one moral want felt by us, which Christianity does not meet. It embraces our nature at every

point. It evinces its origin with the Author of the soul, by applying to this with absolute fitness; as the air to the lungs, as the light to the eye, as the harmonies of music to the sense of melody, as the beautiful adaptations of color in nature to the taste in ourselves for brightness and proportion. The only influence that debars this system from an instant conquest of every heart, is the love of that heart for the world and for sin. This may be overcome. The system itself brings powers for overcoming it; among them the greatest conceivable by us. When that has been accomplished, the supremacy of the system is established in the soul. The more it is studied, the more firmly does it grapple the conviction and the love. From the vital and intimate embrace with every faculty, for which it is designed and toward which it aspires, it cannot be dislodged. Its authority being established, every thought will at last be subjected to its sway.

Thus it gains individuals. It goes from them to others. For its tendency is to continual diffusion. As a fire in the bones, it burns till it is spoken. It gathers its recipients—as no philosophy does, and no ethical scheme—into churches and assemblies. It secures the communication of itself to children in their infancy, that they may be early imbued with its forces. It organizes agencies for its wider dissemination. Its tendency is to make each whom it reaches a minister to advance it; to make each community in which it is established a centre from which it shall spread more widely; to run and return, like the wheels in the vision, till all are enlightened; and so, at last, to extend through the Race. My Hearers, it is fitted for that; as the Eagle for his flight! And if we remember that God has framed it, that he has intentionally so fitted it to man, and so endued it with power for every appeal, that he has made it so self-diffusive—we scarcely shall doubt that Supremacy is before it. Its every triumph in the Past, bears a prophecy of the Future. Its total structure discovers it to be, what Neander has styled it, "a world-subjecting Principle." The presumption seems complete that at last it will triumph.

III. And yet this presumption may be further increased. It is a fact which we may properly glance at in the third place, because it has important relations to this point, that the accomplishment of this final supremacy of Christianity *will nobly complete the circle of History; will give unity, wholeness to the annals of the Race; will show through their courses a sublime method.*

It is a fearful mystery—the permission of Sin with its power in the world, and the exposure of so many to its desolating influence! As we remember what disastrous effects it has wrought, how it has blasted the fortunes of families and of nations, what broad tracts of life have been wasted beneath it—especially, as we remember what souls it has ruined, what destinies of doom it has brought upon multitudes—the question will come up, we cannot repress it, Why has this been? How has God suffered it? If it could not wisely have been prevented while the system remained, why was not the Race cut off from being, its History stayed in mid progress, and the period put to such destructions? The question recurs, and presses for an answer. The reply that seems most nearly to meet it, and to satisfy the heart that is agitated by it, is this: This sin is for a time. It is permitted for a purpose. Its course of triumph draws near the end. Christianity is to overcome it, as a system of God for human renewal, replete with quickening and sanative force. Righteousness is to follow it, to restore beauty to the earth. And the ages that are past shall be as nothing in the comparison of those that are to come; peopled with happy and pure intelligences, serene with the presence and favor of God.—If this is the order of History, then that becomes explicable, and God is revealed in it. Then sin itself shall be seen to have had uses. Then shall clearly be displayed, through the vast complete process, the wisdom, the grace, and the omnipotence of Jehovah. Before that majestic Spiritual system amid which He presides, with which we have connection, where faculty is powerful, emotion vivid—before that shall be shown, through the pro-

gress of our Race, the saddest yet the sublimest lessons. Light shall be shed on the nature of sin; on the simplicity of its principle; on its nearness to any self-confident mind; on the terrible strength of its grasp on the will; on the fearful effects which it works where obeyed. Light shall be shed on the possibility of a recovery from sin unto holiness—a fact not unfolded in the economy of Heaven; on the effectiveness of truth and moral appliance in meeting and subduing this terrible power; especially on the power and grace of God's Spirit, the source of knowledge and purity to the fallen. Light shall be shed on God's character and Being; on his patience, long-suffering, and unspeakable mercy; on the wisdom that arranged and the grace that established the agencies of Redemption; on the Trinity of the Divine nature, that stands above these and comes to manifestation at Bethlehem and on Calvary. Light shall be shed on the beauty of Holiness, as contrasted against Sin, in the blessedness which it erects on the ruins of the Fall; on the power of God to make that holiness permanent. Light shall be shed on each principle of truth most needful to be known by intelligent beings, and each shall be set in vivid expression. Yet through the whole great scope of History, a sum of holiness, and so of joy, immeasurable by us, shall be secured; a result shall be accomplished most worthy of God. Where sin hath abounded, grace shall much more abound; and it shall reign, through righteousness, unto Life. The splendid close of human history shall overshadow with beauty the gloom of the beginning. The dissonance of sin shall be lost amid praises.

This seems to be the method of History. It commends itself to us, as appropriate to God. On another hypothesis we can scarcely understand why the earth was not dissolved, or its total population destroyed by the flood, instead of being left to be ravaged by sin. Particular historic events suggest this; especially the laborious introduction of Christianity, with the agencies combined in it, and its retinue of miracles. There is something, indeed, within ourselves,—an impression of moral progress and

order, as realized in the system administered on the earth—a sense, if we may so express it, of the rhythm and proportion of the History which God frames,—an intuitive apprehension of the possible majestic Unity to which all agencies may be subordinate, and through which may be revealed the Glory of the Highest—which gives new impulse to the belief of this result. In such apprehension we use not fancy or desire, but the noblest intelligent and moral powers with which God has endowed us. We are spontaneously impelled to attribute to it objective reality. Through it we seem, to ourselves at least, to enter the greatness and breadth of God's plans; to stand for the time as under the shadow of the Throne! Remembering what man was, how fearfully he has fallen, yet what powers he retains, for what stations he is fitted, the inference fills us with the sense of its justness, it appeals to the soul with an almost self-evidencing power, that such a result is designed for the race. In its attainment the history of Man shall come 'full-circle;' the Garden and the Fall being lost in the effulgence of Calvary and the Ascension; and the Earth, won back from darkness, restored from sin, illumined and purified by the grace of the Holiest, becoming a nobler trophy of God's power, a more beautiful witness to his wisdom and his love, than when it first hung, blushing and glad, upon the morning skies! Christianity supreme, will close with songs and harping symphonies the turbulent drama of human History.

IV. Thus far we have considered only presumptive arguments for the coming Supremacy of Christianity on the earth. But these views are chiefly important, of course, as introducing us to the clear survey of God's promises, and giving us the light beneath which to read them. I remark, therefore, in the fourth place, that *the specific declarations of God in the Scriptures*, assure us of that result.

Take the text as an example. "From henceforth expecting, till his enemies be made his footstool." How could the Holy

Ghost, who was speaking in Paul, have otherwise expressed with as striking an emphasis the certainty of Christ's triumph? —of a triumph, too, you observe, not wrought by any more signal manifestation of his personal glory, but by the forces which inhere in the system he established, or which are now and permanently connected with it. Consider the parables of Christ, relating to the matter: that of the leaven, for example, unobserved in its principle, but working steadily outward and pervading the mass; of the grain of mustard seed, springing up into a tree that shadows the earth. These state no proposition in the exactness of terms; but how are they full—as are the branches of the tree of singing birds—of intimations of the truth which we consider. Go back to the Hebrew Scriptures, and see how impressive and how rich are their prophecies of the subjection of the earth to the reign of Messiah; then interpret these prophecies into harmony with the Text.—"I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." "They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. * * He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. * * Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him. * * His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed." "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. * * And he shall judge among the

nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. * * They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." "Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut, day nor night, that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought." "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

In these passages from the Scripture, and throughout that large class of passages of which these are but specimens, we have the mind of God, remember, in personal conference with the mind of the writer. It is the knowledge of God, which is here expressed to us. Rather, it is the purpose and plan of God, which are certain of fulfilment, which here are shown to us. How evident then does it become, through these disclosures, that Chris-

tianity is to triumph among mankind! Could any thing be displayed more vividly than that is, through this intense oriental picturing; amid the imagery, of battle and of conquest, familiar to the age. All opposition is to be subdued before Christ. The kings of the earth are to render him homage. The church, which is his body, is to fill and possess the ends of the earth; while until that, according to the text, he is throned in heaven. This is an end designed of God, incorporated definitely among his plans, a permanent part of his broad system; and thus as certain to be realized as stars to rise or waters to flow. It cannot be prevented while God's throne abides. Nay it *cannot* be prevented! Already, before the eye of God, as related to his immutable thought, it is realized, my Friends! and if we could rise to comprehend his Infinitude, we should feel, as now we cannot, that to-day this is present in its glory to Him; that into his ear are entering its praises! Shall any thing blast its majestic reality? Shall any thing make its coming impossible? Oh, if we think aright of God, in the vastness of his power, in the steadfastness of his purposes, in the inward accordance of his character with this end, we shall not doubt its perfect accomplishment. Before the brightness of his promise, our argument is needless.

V. And yet, my Friends, for the clearer illustration of these promises, and to gain from their announcements a more vivid impression, we may glance for a moment, in the fifth place, at this:—*The historic progress of Christianity among men, with the nature of the arena on which it now acts, gives assurance of its supremacy.* The two bring the Future almost palpably before us.

Of course I cannot survey this field. It is too vast, of itself, for a single discourse. It was discussed in part, with signal ability, on your last anniversary. I shall glance at it briefly, and use it for illustration: as the half formed crystal illustrates the law. What has been the history of the centuries since Christ? Has it not been manifestly this:—the history of his system con-

tending continually, and in the great aggregate contending successfully, against fierce oppositions? presenting itself in new forms and relations as new exigencies arose, accomplishing in society beneficent effects, and reaching out constantly toward a larger dominion? Certainly, this is the method of the Past. Here runs the central range of history, which limits all currents and determines their directions, and only as we follow which do we read, with distinctness the relations of events.

Christianity seemed crucified in the person of Christ, and the mailed band that guarded the cross to hold in its circlet the tomb of the system. But it rose from the grave into newness of power, and shed a glory from the Ascension that streamed as a renovating light into three thousand hearts. It was almost crushed, apparently, by the persecutions that drove the disciples from Jerusalem. But that unskilful trampling upon fire only scattered every where sparks of life. Nero thought he could crush Christianity. The force of the Empire was summoned to accomplish it. As one great armed man, whose every muscle was strung with hatred, it matched itself against the churches. It seemed a more hopeless task than for the infant of days to grapple the giant, for the new-born religion, whose Head had been crucified, to cope with that colossal empire which shadowed the earth with the flight of its eagles, and administered a dominion that almost realized an earthly omnipresence. Yet Christianity outlived its enemy and his successors; and when Dioclesian, from the palace of Nicomedia, issued the last decree against it, the bands of disciples had become multitudinous. From every spot where the blood of the martyr had damped the earth, had sprung a harvest of kindred zeal.—At length Christianity gained supremacy in the empire. The very cross to which the Roman soldiery had nailed the Nazarene, exalted in the Labarum, and blazoned with the jewelled monogram of Christ, became installed as the imperial standard, and banished the eagle that had flashed on every plain from the Tigris to the Thames. Along the lines of Roman dominion the gospel extended, till it traversed tribes

it could not otherwise have reached. It spread from that centre of sovereignty to Persia, to further Asia, across the Mediteranean, to Africa. It rapidly was established, as an influential system, over half the globe; and in the discoveries of the subsequent ages was brought to this Atlantis in the west. In name, at least, it is every where here. And the system that seemed entombed at Jerusalem reckons to-day three hundred millions of adherents among mankind.

In the internal history of Christianity, if we do not discern a progress so apparent, we find enough, when we carefully discriminate, to illustrate the promise of its final supremacy. It was borne into contact at first, remember, with the most various and depraved intellectual activity that the world had known. It was brought against the severe ritualism of the Pharisee, the asceticism of the Essene, the indifference of those who denied Immortality; against the polished, tasteful, but most licentious religion that had built its temples over Greece, whose influences had imbued all poetry and art, and had thoroughly impregnated the mind of that people; against the unconquerable pride and the ambition for power in the Roman character. It had its converts among Africans and Scythians, in the east and in the west, from the bondmen and the free. And when it became the religion of the State, it was accepted by many without reaching the heart. It could not be, therefore, that grasping such different and prolific natures, and acting so directly on their common depravity, it should not suffer for a time, in its forms, from the rebound. 'Falling on such a myriad-sided surface as the humanity of that day,' it has truly been said, 'the heavenly light must undergo refractions.' It would have been the greatest of all miracles if when infused into a spiritual life so variant and corrupt as that which it first met, Christianity had renewed it entirely at once, and had developed itself in fruits, of belief, of rite, and of public institution, harmonious with itself and accordant with each other. The reverse was inevitable. In the powerful impulse which it gave to human thought, there sprang up doctrines novel and dangerous.

The Ebionite carried Judaism into Christianity, and preached Jesus as a human Messiah. The Gnostic declared matter impure, and knowledge the chief good; that the world had been formed by a subordinate Demiurge, and that Christ was a mere presentation of Deity in the aspect of man. The Manichean imported into Christian language the doctrines of the Indian and Persian theologies, resolving Christ into the angel of the Sun, and declaring Mani the Divine paraclete. Even where Christianity abode in its purity, there gathered about it new forms of power. They became solidified at length, or some of them did, as Paul saw they tended to while he was living, in the system of the Papacy. Through that they exerted wide influence for evil. Yet even beneath that, Christianity remained in power in many. The error did not mar the purity of the Scriptures. In its time Reformation came; the liberation of the Truth from its shackles of rite and its death-load of error, its free publication again to men. Undoubtedly from that has come evil again, and many have swung from revelation and its mysteries into denial of the faith. Undoubtedly the system of sacraments and a priesthood will still have sway over many broad regions; proposing its own vain terms of salvation, and locking the truth in guarded walls rather than scattering it from a thousand springs. But, upon the whole, can it be doubted that Christianity is now at work in the earth in a freer and richer development than it has known before since the earliest era; that it has worked itself free of many incumbrances, has outlived contests which it will not meet again, has passed through every struggle without losing its elastic original force, has reached an expression, into faiths and institutions, as pure as the sinfulness of man would allow, and now has a vantage it never has had, and asserts for itself a wider dominion. Look back to the Cross, and the disciples gazing on it in terror from afar, and then look around on the nations that are influenced by the faith which there centres—and note the change! Then take these elements, established in History, and calculate the orbit Christianity is to fill! Remember, that she has met philosophies as well

as armies, the combinations of heresy and the assaults of power, and has never been overcome; she has been girded in showy but poisoned doctrines, and still has retained her life within them; she has established among men new systems of doctrine, and new theories of the universe; she has acted efficiently for their social melioration, and has sent out her influences into Art, into Literature, into Commerce, into Government, has even dropped her seeds under the pillars of despotism till those have been moved and overthrown by their growth; she has made events tributary to her advancement that seemed at first essentially hostile, has used discussion for the spread of her principles, has been content with no attainment but has still sought diffusion, has made seas rough with the track of her keels that scarcely before had been shadowed by a sail, is now more dear than ever to the Race, more loftily placed for subduing it to obedience, and full of the life God gave her at the first. What then shall be her progress in the future? Is God's purpose failing? Nay! through this wondrous march of history do we not see that purpose advancing to its accomplishment? Do there not come to us pledges of the supremacy of Christ?

Observe, too, what is now before Christianity. Undoubtedly, there are difficulties, oppositions before it; peculiar skepticisms, which it must meet; gigantic abuses, which it must abolish; immense reforms, which it must compass. But this, at least, is true concerning it; that while it now is young as ever, inexhaustible and Divine in its inward force, it has such agencies to be used for its diffusion, and such facilities for rapid advancement, as it never before had. Its establishment in this country, at a juncture so critical, and in so much purity; its command, to so large an extent, of the commercial power of the world; its manifest coincidence with that popular freedom, to whose institutions in this land and in England the World is turning, 'as the Parsee to the Sun;'—these are signally in its favor. The kingdoms are opening to it, on every hand. Through the agencies of commerce, beneath the influence of wider relations of treaty, sometimes it

would seem under preparatory influences of the Spirit of God, —they are become pervious to its powers. Africa, in the south, in the north, in the interior; China; India; Persia; the Islands of the Sea;—it may enter them all. Look eastward from this Atlantic shore, look westward from the mountains that skirt the Pacific, and either way Christianity may go. Japan itself has been entered by our sailors and visited by our fleet; and a Protestant Christianity shall yet redeem, in those 'Islands of the morning,' the promise which Jesuitism so fatally blighted. The agencies for sending it, too, how they multiply continually! Where intercourse between nations was rare and perilous, it now is safe and recurrent as the weeks. The forces of steam weave nations together; and every flashing foot that beats the wave with its swift tramp, and every sounding wheel that rolls upon the earth, but furnishes the means of advancing Christianity. The general movement over the earth, which is running through the frame of human society as the tremble of an earthquake runs out among forests and up among crags, and down under oceans into deepest foundations, shaking all with its shiver—the movement toward popular elevation and freedom,—but helps these agencies, and speeds them onward. It gives to Christian effort new import and effect. It prepares for the entrance of this subjugating power. And no man knows what agencies more swift, more world-embracing, shall yet come forth to spread the Gospel. The Dreams of this age, shall be Inventions in the next.

Look abroad then over the earth, and consider what a place Christianity has on it, what progress it has made, what agencies it wields, and what openings are before it—and can we hesitate as to its Future? It has been perverted; but what of that? The heresies have been heard, and are many of them answered. The Papacy has built up, from its very destructions, a historical argument against itself which only a desperate purpose can surmount. A Protestant Christianity now commands the world's commerce. The Race is ready for the infusion of its forces.

One may almost imagine there is hush in Heaven! that the gates are opening of a new era, and the seven angels are standing before God! The period that commences, are not its aspects *full* of promise? Does there not gleam the assurance, through its freedom and force, and its boundless activity, that if we labor as God would have us, its close shall see the wide-spread Gospel! that on its tireless wheels and fiery horses, Christianity, robed in white, shall ride unto her triumph! Indeed, my Friends, ALL points to that! The fact that God prepared this System, that with such wisdom he fitted it to Man, that through such vast preparatory agencies he brought it to his knowledge; the fact that it meets man's wants so fully, is adapted to the Race, and establishes as it goes the means of its diffusion; the fact that History, which must seem so defective unless Christianity supreme shall complete it, will then be unfolded to so noble a method;—these urge us to believe that such will be the issue. And then God's promises arise to establish it. Then History shows us these promises in fulfilment. It does not display the risen Sun; but it shows the long pennons and shafts of light that stream upon the azure, precursors of his coming!

Christianity *is* to rule the Earth. As a spiritual, Divine system, expressed to us through the Scriptures, all shall accept it. Not as a Church, merely—not primarily as a Church, or any institution of outward order—shall it gain this authority. Not as a Doctrine, merely, and a dogma of belief; least of all as a simply civilizing force, for the reconstruction of Society. As a spiritual and sublime System, embracing truth, precept, promise, life, all gathered in its organic unity, Christianity is to triumph.—It shall purify and exalt individual hearts, and hallow them with God's presence. It shall pervade family groups; and the glory over Bethany shall but typify the promise and the joy above them. It shall gather men into permanent and harmonious assemblies, sympathetic, co-working, mirroring Heaven on their purity. Pervading the spiritual life of nations, and renewing that into holiness, it shall blossom into all the forms of their expression.

It shall show itself in Literature; dignifying the labors of History; giving a tone as from Eternity to the energy of Eloquence; springing up into the airiest and most charming expression in the beautiful grace of a Christian poetry; subliming Art, even, by mastering and renewing it, and making it the handmaid of the verities of Christ. It shall build up its permanent and organized results, in Institutions of public beneficence and philanthrophy, in establishments for general popular culture as well as for special religious training, in free governments, humane policies, and just laws. The skepticisms that have been powerful, shall melt beneath its beauty. The fortified Abuses, that now affront Heaven, shall be dissolved at its authority, as the earth itself shall be at the Revelation of God. Then shall be PEACE, throughout the earth! The lion and the lamb shall lie down together. The beauty of Paradise shall clothe the world. And every breeze that floats above it shall bear upon its wing the songs of Praise!—Toward that, my Friends, daily and nightly the world draws nigher! When that is reached the world is saved! Then shall the work of God, through all the ages, have come unto its fruitage. Then shall be shown his Love and Power. By the Church,—as then universal, expressing Christianity in perfect forms, extending through the Race the life of Christ, renewing all to the beauty of holiness—shall be made known to Principalities and Powers, throughout the orders and hierarchies of Heaven, the manifold wisdom of Him who formed it!

HOW OUGHT WE, THEN, MY FRIENDS, TO LABOR FOR CHRISTIANITY! TO SPREAD ITS TRUTH, ITS PROMISE AND LIFE!—For this one practical lesson, I have brought to you the subject. Cheerfully, joyfully, should we labor; with enthusiasm and confidence, and with the energy of endeavor which these inspire. We are placed at a critical point in the progress. Our agencies and advantages are vast for action. If we act vigorously, we send an influence far out on Time. If we now falter and turn upon our course, if we think that Christianity is becoming effete,

that some new force must take its place, that some manifestation of Christ in his glory must precede its supremacy—we are failing at the point where of all we should be strong. The moral argument against such theories, derived from their influence in repressing Christian activity, is definite and just. The hostile pressure, from the Scriptures and from the past, is enough to overwhelm them. Let us never allow them to hamper our effort. Our duty is TO WORK! with ardor and fidelity; not with passionate fitful impulse, but with an energy that abides, and grows mightier as developed;

> Like the star—unhasting;
> Like the star—unresting!

We ought to grapple Christianity ourselves, with a firmer faith, with a deeper attachment; to illustrate its beauty more brightly in our life; to enter more largely its truth and promise, and its spirit of grace. We ought to apply it more stringently to affairs. We ought to spread it more rapidly to others. As an age distinguished for the rapid extension of commercial relations, and the rapid advance of mechanic arts, this should be preëminently a Missionary age. The resources God gives us, are to be used in His service. Let an unfailing trust direct their application. With every improvement which invention developes, our effort should increase; with every new field that opens before us, its reach should be wider. The press, the railway, steam-frigates, the wires that talk like genii in the air, they all must be subordinated, and more and more, to Him who cometh! They arise to us in God's Providence—this swift unwearying foot, this iron lung, this column of fire which carries as well as guides, this nerve of nations; and so they must be used, by God's people, for His purposes. What the Fathers did with art, as it rose in the cathedral, as it blushed upon the canvass, that we must do with art, as it heaves in the engine, as it thrills in the wires. Amid these quick electric times, when knowledge is increas-

ing, when many are running to-and-fro, when society is sensitive to every impulse, when God in his providence seems taking the masses and shaking them asunder that truth may reach them, when even across the seas he bares the kingdoms to the force of the Gospel, and breaks the arch-ways beneath which we may bear the banner of Salvation—now, more than ever, we should labor for Christ, and use every force for the spread of his system; so that the annihilation of distance upon the earth *may* teach men what Carlyle says it cannot—'the winged flight, through immensity, to God's Throne;' so that the cheaper fabrics, the swifter railways, *may* 'help men toward what Novalis calls God, Freedom, and Immortality.' The penetrating despondency that enthralls some minds, as if Christianity were growing weak—the subtle skepticism that binds the will with its fine filaments, and teaches men to doubt if the system can grapple the problems of our times, if it can master the resistances that here confront it, can work out freedom and truth among us, if it will not be lost amid politics and arts, if the personal coming of the Lord is not needed to renew it—let us cut sharply through this, with the blade of God's promise! Let us lift ourselves above it, remembering the past! Let us *never* despond! no, not for an hour! We might have done that, under the terrible domination of the first persecution. We might have done that, when the sculptured sarcophagus of a system of sacraments encased Christianity. But what have we to do with despondency, what with anything but gladness and the grandest activity, when standing with the Scriptures open and free, with Christianity throned in them and God on their side, amid an era so brilliant and propitious! Oh, if we have faith and a justified courage, if we use the resources God gives us so amply, if we draw down by prayer that aid which He has pledged—then may *we* see this truth progressing broadly, with vast rapidity, toward glorious predominance! The redemption of Christ, the glory of God, the beauty of Heaven, the grace of the Spirit—on all the trou-

bled waves of life these shall shed their sweet influence. They shall kindle new joys throughout the race. Meliorations in society shall follow them as they go, responding to their impulse. They shall cover the earth with forms of beauty! By every hope that springs within us, by the confidence of prayer inspired of the Spirit, by the manifold voices of history and the present, by the promises that stud the arch of God's word—we know that to be possible! For that Christianity was given and is fitted! For that, then, we should strive! until the Fact answers the Prophecy; until the dawn has brightened into Day!

For the last thought, my Hearers, connected with this subject, how vividly does this come to us:—*The personal obligation of each of us to submit from the heart to Christ's dominion!* The ancient legend of the Church, that Julian died exclaiming as he expired "Galilean, Thou hast conquered!" is certain to be realized, for the substance of its history, in every soul not submitted to Christ. His rule at last shall be complete; and the period of that sway shall compass Eternity. How great then the privilege of now accepting him; of entering through faith the Kingdom he administers; of finding in that our permanent Home!—It is very observable in the Scriptural disclosures concerning the glory to be reached in Millenium, that the blessedness of the earth seems to shade away into the blessedness of Heaven. The horizon of the Future to the inspired seers, instead of being sharp and defined against the embosoming Eternity as was that of the Past, where time in its relations to man began, melts away into glory, and is merged in the infinite; as the edge of the cloud is dissolved beneath the splendor of the Sun at his setting; and one can scarcely tell where earth has closed and Heaven begins. Ah, that shall be the felicity of the soul that has truly and inwardly taken Christ as its Prince! It shall dwell on earth, and dwell in Heaven; on the glorified earth bright with Christ's presence, amid the rapture of Heaven, where

he is enthroned!' But in that last and glorious age,—oh, let us feel this!—that age to whose perfection all others shall have contributed, and in whose glory they all shall be crowned, there will be found no place on earth, no place in Heaven, for him who hath not bowed to Christ! The dominion of Messiah hath no promises for him!

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY.

We present to-night, the *twenty-fourth* Annual Report of the Foreign Missionary Society of New York and Brooklyn.

And we would record at the outset the goodness of God in preserving the lives of all its Officers and Managers during the year now closed.

The objects which this Association aim to realize are limited in number, and easily defined: yet most important. No mission stations, or churches, or missionaries are under its supervision. It has no peculiar *ecclesiastical character* or *connection;* so that in the accomplishment of those objects it is neither aided nor hindered by these, or any such extrinsic circumstances. The constitution under which we act, declares the purpose of our organization to be two-fold—First, *To disseminate missionary intelligence;* and, secondly, *To raise funds in aid of the missions under the care of the parent Society.* The single aim, then, which should engage our attention, and direct our efforts, is the attainment of these results in the happiest manner, and most abundant measure. And there are some circumstances, to which we would briefly advert, that impart to it a character even of grandeur, and which should enlist our warmest sympathies, and most zealous cooperation.

Thirty-three evangelical churches of the Presbyterian and Congregational order, are associated together in this organization, comprising from ten to twelve thousand members. These churches are contiguous to each other, occupying a district of territory only a few miles square, and afford facilities for mutual intercourse and counsel, and opportunities for united action unequalled by any other missionary organization in the country. And to this we may add, that the members and the pastors of these churches, probably mingle together in the ordinary walks of life, and know, and are known of one another to an extent which few even of ourselves have thought, and which can occur only in a city whose business localities are such as those we possess. The *present* and the *prospective* resources of this field, the number and the pecuniary ability of its churches, should incite us to the most energetic efforts in its cultivation and development; while its geographical position, and the commercial character of the business transacted, and of the wealth accumulating here, make this more

than any other auxiliary *national* in its spirit, and give us relations and connections at home and abroad, which designate *the work of foreign missions*, as distinguishingly the work in which we should be engaged.

These circumstances impose upon us responsibilities of a most solemn nature. We would meet them in the spirit of Christ, and invoke the prayers and cooperation of every church, and of every member of each church in their fulfillment.

Under these impressions, and with a view to greater efficiency, this Society has been reorganized during the past year: and though we have not had time fully to test the merits of the present constitution, we have already seen results which clearly indicate the wisdom of the change, not only in the spirit awakened, and the measures adopted to promote the cause of missions among us, but also in the amount of funds collected—somewhat more than $16,000 having been realized, which is an advance of nearly $2,000 upon the receipts of the previous year. By means of this new arrangement, there has been a distribution of labor among the churches, designed to awaken a more lively interest in all the members. Two directors are selected from each church, whose duty it is, in the language of the constitution, "to do all in their power to enlist all the members of the church and congregation in the missionary work, and to take measures if practicable to secure systematic and regular contributions to the funds of this society, from their respective churches and sabbath-schools." Another feature in the new constitution is succinctly, yet clearly, expressed in the seventh article.

"The Board of Managers shall appoint from their number annually three Standing Committees, whose duty it shall be to advise and consult with the Board of Managers, and particularly with the Directors in each of the churches, as to the most efficient mode of promoting the objects of this Society in their respective churches. One of these Committees shall attend to this duty in the churches *east*, another in the churches *west* of Broadway, to 14th street, and thence west of the 4th avenue, in the city of New York, and the other in the churches in the cities of Brooklyn and Williamsburg. These Committees shall report their proceedings to the Board from time to time, at their discretion, or when required to do so; and it shall be their duty to consider and suggest to the Board any measures that may occur to them by which to increase the efficiency of the Society, and augment its receipts."

We feel sure that with proper effort, this system can be made a great blessing to the missionary cause in this city and vicinity.

There are some circumstances, additional to those already mentioned, which should be distinctly considered by the friends and members of this Society. We have peculiar obstacles to encounter, and in this more than in any other Benevolent Christian enterprise in which we are interested, the duty of personal concern and painstaking is devolved upon us. Most of the other Benevolent

Associations have both their centers of operation and their secretaries for correspondence resident and influential among us, and these greatly serve to give prominence and character to the institutions with which they are connected. The institution to which we are auxiliary, as you are aware, is located in Boston, and since the death of the lamented Dr. Armstrong we have not enjoyed the presence of a resident secretary in this city. The American Board has either had no official representative whatever among us, or only a subordinate agent, and on this account has labored under material disadvantages. The Society has felt this, and has endeavored to overcome this obstacle by its own more earnest efforts; but amid the cares of daily business, we have been, and ever must be, unable to devote that amount of time and labor to the cause, indispensable to its steady and healthful progress among us. We trust that ere long we shall have residing and active among us a successor to the late secretary, who by the blessing of God, shall develop the interest and the munificence of the churches in a measure corresponding to the character of the field, and the grandeur of the cause. There are great difficulties, however, in the way of this consummation. But we have the most cordial cooperation of the Prudential Committee at Boston, and we confidently hope that our combined efforts will not be in vain.

There are two facts, which, in closing this report, we would simply state without attempting their explanation. The first is, that the cause of missions has made very little advance on this field during the past twelve years, although the number, the wealth, and we trust the piety of the churches have greatly increased. The second is, that this is not the case in respect to the other Benevolent Societies: while they have advanced in the amount of their receipts during the past five years, as compared with the preceding five years, 40 or 50 per cent., this cause has advanced less than 5 per cent.

All that we can now say is, that these things ought not so to be. The magnitude of the interest at stake is so vast—the present and prospective importance of this field is so great—the metropolitan and commercial character of this city is so distinguishing, and the power of our example for good or for evil so extensive, as to forbid the least relaxation of effort—as to stimulate us to any labors and sacrifices, necessary to honor God in the honorable and influential post He has assigned to us.

THOMAS H. SKINNER, Jr.,

Corresponding Secretary.

THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN,

in Account with their Treasurer, J. W. TRACY.

CR.

From	By Cash, from the following sources:			
April 14,	Allen Street Church, New York,	$151 17		
1850,	Bleecker Street do "	896 22		
to	Brainerd do "	176 71		
April 13,	Brick do "	666 75		
1851.	Broadway Tabernacle, "	265 45		
	Central Church, "	903 22		
	Church of the Puritans, "	851 66		
	Duane Street Church, "	20 00		
	Eastern Congl. do "	17 67		
	Eleventh Pres. do "	78 36		
	Hamd. St. Cong. do "	5 00		
	Harlem Pres. do "	31 00		
	Houston Street do "	98 55		
	Mercer Street do "	3,149 95		
	North Pres. do "	19 52		
	Pearl Street do "	257 20		
	Pres. Ch. on University Pl. "	393 00		
	Seventh Pres. Church, "	287 18		
	Sixth Street do "	347 90		
	Spring Street do "	198 27		
	Tenth Pres. do "	366 40		
	Thirteenth St. do "	65 95		
	West Pres. do "	496 20		
				9,743 33
	Bedford do Brooklyn,	12 44		
	Bridge Street do "	96 11		
	Ch. of the Pilgrims, "	1,655 73		
	Clinton Av. Cong. Ch. "	27 00		
	First Pres. Church, "	751 45		
	Plymouth Con. do "	493 28		
	Second " do "	50 00		
	Second Pres. do "	821 18		
	South " do "	1,036 12		
	Third " do "	100 00		
				5,043 31
	First " do Williamsburgh,			40 00
	Sundry donations in New York and Brooklyn,			1,526 24
				$16,352 88

DR.

From			
April 14,	To Cash paid for 5,000 copies Dr. Mason's Sermon,		$126 07
1850,	" printing and expenses last annual meeting,		10 18
to	" 4 months rent of room Brick Ch. Chapel,		6 00
April 13,	" Expenses of Committee to and from Boston,		39 00
1851.	" A. Merwin, Agent A. B. C. F. M.		16,171 63
			$16,352 88

E. & O. E.

NEW YORK, April 14, 1851.

J. W. TRACY, *Treasurer.*

NEW YORK, April 25, 1851.
Examined and Found Correct.

DAVID HOADLEY,
WALTER S. GRIFFITH, } *Auditors.*

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FOR THE YEAR 1851.

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JASPER CORNING.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

ANSON G. PHELPS, | JOHN A. DAVENPORT.
WILLIAM C. GILMAN, | DAVID HOADLEY.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

Rev. THOMAS H. SKINNER, Jr.

RECORDING SECRETARY.

ALMON MERWIN.

TREASURER.

J. W. TRACY.

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Allen Street Presbyterian Church, ... M. T. Hewit, Edward Chapin.
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Brainerd " " .... Wm. A. Booth, W. E. Dodge.
Brick " " .... A. L. Ely, C. H. Merry.
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West " " ....A. D. F. Randolph, Abram L. Earle.

Bedford Cong. Church, Brooklyn,....D. O. Caulkins, Edward T. Goodall.
Bridge st. " " " ....Wm. Vail, Clark Jacobs.
Central Presb. " " ....Charles C. Mudge, D. J. Ledyard.
Clinton Av. Cong. " " ....S. Davenport, Mark H. Newman.
Church of the Pilgrims, " ....Charles J. Stedman, Alfred S. Barnes.
First Presbyterian Church, " ....Alfred Edwards, R. J. Thorne.
Plymouth Cong. " " ....J. Tasker Howard, H. C. Bowen.
Second Presbyterian " " ....Charles Clarke, Lucius Hopkins.
South " " " ....James Robinson, Walter S. Griffith.
South Cong. " " ....D. E. Jones, S. W. Grant.
Third Presbyterian " " ....W. W. Hurlbut, John C. Halsey, M.D.

First Presb. Church, Williamsburg,..Paul J. Fish.

THE REJECTED OFFERING.

A

SERMON

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

OF

NEW-YORK AND BROOKLYN,

MARCH 27 AND APRIL 3, 1853.

BY

REV. M. S. HUTTON, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH ON WASHINGTON PLACE,
NEW-YORK.

Published by the Society.

NEW-YORK:
ALMON MERWIN, BIBLE HOUSE, ASTOR PLACE.
1853.

JOHN A. GRAY,
PRINTER,
95 and 97 Cliff Street, N. Y.

SERMON.

MALACHI I. 10.

"I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, *neither will I accept an offering at your hand.*"

THESE words immediately precede one of the richest promises of the grace of God to the Gentile world. They are addressed to the Jewish Church, and are a prediction of their abandonment by God as his peculiar people. "Neither will I accept an offering at your hands. For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles."

It is thus throughout the prophetic writings. We find the predicted casting off of the Jews generally, if not always, followed by a promise respecting the future call of the Gentiles. It would seem as if God intended by this to provoke his people to jealousy, in order that he might arouse them to repentance, and to return to him.

But these threatenings were not heeded, and at length they were executed. God would no more ac-

cept an offering from his ancient people; and, as Paul expresses it, the fall of the Jews became the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles.

These events are here predicted under the figure of the sacrifices which God had ordained; and as the acceptance of the Gentile offerings was the greatest blessing which could be bestowed on them, so the refusal to accept the offering of the Jews was the greatest calamity which God could inflict on them. The pestilence and the famine which He sent upon his ancient people were indeed sad and fearful inflictions; but they were the chastisements of a kind Father. It was a fearful judgment to allow the tread of an hostile barbarian to pollute the courts of their sacred temple, to permit him to desecrate and rob the altar of God, and to carry the people into captivity. We wonder not that they sat down and wept by the waters of Babylon; but there was hope in that punishment; God allowed his exiled children to offer their morning and evening sacrifices, and to observe the solemn fasts. But in the sentence, "I will not accept an offering at your hands," there was no hope; *this* was a calamity and a woe, than which none could be greater in this world.

It is in this light that I desire to consider the text, and to apply the thought to the efforts and the sacrifices which the Lord Jesus calls upon his people to make, and allows them to present, in behalf of his cause and kingdom.

The privilege, the duty, the advantages, and the noble motives which belong to the missionary cause,

have been often and clearly presented; and I have deemed that, by this negative presentation of the subject, I might not only increase the zeal of the people of God, but might disperse from some minds the clouds of despondency which at times rest upon them.

There are some who, I trust, are good men, who, moved by the sorrows seen around them, feel, and utter the feeling, We need not to be so anxious to send the gospel to the perishing heathen; there are sorrows and sufferings in our own land, and at our own doors, to absorb all our charities, and we should attend to these. This is also the common objection of infidelity, and it is certainly plausible. Others, again, whose hearts are really in the work, and whose sympathies are enlisted in behalf of the heathen, as they have contemplated the far-off and lone missionaries, surrounded by the darkness and degradation of heathenism; as they have seen them laboring for years to understand and speak the language of the country, and then, perchance, have seen health and strength failing, just as they are prepared for usefulness—*they* have been ready to ask, *Does not the little good done cost too much?* Nor can it be denied that there is in this, at first view, a sad mysteriousness, at which our wavering and easily discouraged faith is too apt to stagger. I cannot deny that I have felt, in certain cases, sympathy with such trains of thought, especially in the case of the personal friend, the refined, enlightened, and delicately trained female missionary, whose usefulness at home I knew to be great, as I have read the breathings of her fond heart, as her thoughts turned to her once-loved home

left for ever, and on which there settled a cloud of sadness from the moment that the circle was broken by her departure; and then, when I have heard of her early death, or of some peculiar trial which interfered with her usefulness, and seemed to have made her sacrifice of no avail, I have been ready to ask, Did she do wisely in becoming a missionary? Does God ask this? Does the Church do right in accepting such a sacrifice? Have not parents and brothers and sisters been called on to do too much when they give up their loved one, the light of their dwelling, for the benefit of the careless, thankless heathen?

But when, on the other hand, I have thought of the sacrifice and love of Jesus for these very heathen—when I have seen how that love was shed abroad over the heart of the missionary—how her consolations abounded in the midst of her trial—how her separation from early and earthly friends knit her soul the more closely to Jesus—when I have read of her peaceful and triumphant death, and have thought of her present joy at the feet of Jesus, and of the glorious crown which will hereafter encircle her youthful and radiant brow—then have I realized the infinitude of her gain, and felt that these light afflictions were of no weight in comparison with the joy; and I could almost adopt the language of her who, when told that her loved and younger missionary sister slept in Jesus, exclaimed, "I wish her joy;" and *then*, too, I have felt how great a deprivation and loss it would be, were God to say to his people, "I need not your labors of love; I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your

hand." *Then* have I felt that no expression of the anger of my God would be more terrible than to forbid his people's offerings — that the most overwhelming mark of his displeasure would be to shut up my heart from giving to his cause and kingdom, and thus say to me: "No stone shalt *thou* lay in my temple; *thy* offerings shall not beautify heaven, nor make its music louder and sweeter by bringing souls into it."

This, then, is my position drawn from the text: *The greatest curse in this life which God could inflict would be to deny his people the pleasure and the privilege of advancing his cause and kingdom.*

For, 1st, Such a prohibition would prevent them from conferring any real favor upon their fellow-men. The missionary enterprise associates us with the destinies of an immortal existence; the results at which it aims lie above and beyond this world, and reach onward through the ages of eternity. It does, indeed, effect, more than any other instrumentality, the improvement of men's condition in this life; but this is only an incidental good—the great, the ultimate, the only desirable object, is to bring them under an influence for heaven which will enlighten and purify their souls, restore them to the knowledge and friendship of God, and prepare them for a deathless existence beyond the grave. Now, were we excluded from exerting any favorable influence upon men, as immortal and everliving beings, even supposing we did confer temporal good, it would necessarily be short-lived and transitory, and therefore of but little real value in itself. But even this might be esteemed a privilege if there were not

evils connected with it; but, my hearers, a gift which is forbidden to lead to God, which is not allowed to make the receiver grateful to God, which is to exert no good influence upon the eternal destinies of men, necessarily exerts an opposite and baleful influence upon creatures constituted as we are. It would lead away from God, and would thus produce eternal unhappiness in return for any temporal good which it might bestow. Trade and commerce are important elements in human happiness; but if the bestowal of them cause men to lose their souls, could they be regarded as real blessings? It is a blessing to prolong a man's life; but if prolonging life increase the woe of eternity, can it be called a real good? Education is a great blessing; but suppose that our teaching leads away from the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, whom he has sent, will not the intellectual and moral cultivation only make the recipients more susceptible of suffering hereafter, and more obnoxious to the displeasure of a neglected God and Saviour? And can we call any thing that does that a real good? Or, to take one further illustration, perhaps the strongest that I could find, the case of a mother's affection for her beloved child. We cannot overrate its importance, and the greatness of the blessing. Now, suppose that it were told that mother that God would not accept any care which she might put forth for the salvation of her child—that nothing that she could do should forward its eternal welfare—that the better she fitted her child for this world, the more probable would be his eternal unfitness—would she regard her care as a blessing? Would she not

rather follow the example of the heathen mother, and reply as she did when reproved for destroying her infant daughter: Why should she live? Her life will be one of sorrow and suffering, and I have only done unto her as I wish my mother had done unto me. Yes, my hearers, the greatest earthly deprivation with which God could afflict us would be to say, concerning our efforts for the spiritual good of others, "I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hand."

2d. The truth of our position will be further seen when you consider that such a prohibition would exclude us from all sympathy with the plans and purposes of God.

The only object of real interest to God and to all the heavenly inhabitants, as far as has been revealed to us, is the spread of the gospel on earth, and the salvation of the souls of men. The Bible invariably speaks of the things of this world as important only as they bear upon this subject. The fashion of the world it declares is passing away, and soon the last ray of its glory will rest upon the bosom of that dark cloud which comes charged with its final doom. But earth has interests connected with the councils of an eternity that is past, and with the ages of an eternity to come. Over the ruins of our apostasy the thoughts of the Son of God lingered before the foundations of the world were laid, or the heavens stretched abroad as a curtain. Immediately on the fall of man, he interposed his mediation to arrest the progress of the curse, and to bring the apostate race under a dispensation of mercy which, in

its final consummation, will realize all that infinite benevolence can desire. From that period he has gone forward in the prosecution of his plans. For this, the world has been upheld in existence; empires have risen and fallen; nations have dashed against nations; all have been, under his guidance, made to tend but to one grand object. God the Father, in his love, has given his only-begotten Son to suffer and die. Jesus has traversed our earth in sorrow and suffering—has died on the cross, descended to the grave, risen again, ascended to heaven, is seated at the right hand of God, and has all power in heaven and earth committed to his hands, with the view of accomplishing the great purposes of the love of God in the salvation of man. For this object he has interested all the holy angelic throngs which surround his throne; all delight in being ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto the heirs of salvation. Over every sinner who turns to God they rejoice; over every saved sinner they watch; around his dying-bed they assemble, form his attendant guard, and bear his ransomed soul, at the moment of death, to the feet of Jesus, leaving it there with rejoicing song. Now, suppose Jesus should say to us, "I will not allow you to aid in this my grand and glorious and loving work; from you I will receive no aid, no sympathy; you shall not join in these plans of my omnipotent love; you shall not have the consolation of the sympathy of your God."

Oh! horrible supposition! What Christian would not pray with anxious entreaty, "O Lord my God,

exclude me not from the privilege of doing something for thy cause and the advance of thy kingdom!"

3d. If God should exclude us from the privilege of aiding in the spread of religion, there is no other object on earth worth living for. I need not speak to this audience of the transitory and fleeting nature of all earthly enjoyments and pleasures; I need not dwell upon their inability to meet the wants of our immortal nature, or to sustain in the hour of trials and affliction. Take what is generally considered to bring with it the greatest amount of earthly happiness, and which, if properly used, may be truly so regarded—I speak of wealth—and yet, if you will estimate all the toil, the care, the anxiety, the responsibility connected with gathering and keeping wealth, and then add all the sicknesses and pains of body and mind which belong to life, would any wise man desire to live merely for the sake of wealth? Would he not be more wise to prefer the life of the twittering swallow? Would he not enjoy more the life of a petted lap-dog? Yes, my hearers, if we cannot be allowed to enter into God's plans and purposes—if eternity be not added to man's existence—if he have no object above and beyond this life—life, the life of a *man*, in this world of sin, sorrow and suffering, is no real boon, no worthy gift.

4th. That a refusal, on the part of God, to allow us to aid in the spread of his cause, is to be regarded as the greatest mark of his displeasure, may be argued from the company in which such a decision would place us. The only beings thus excluded, of whom we know any thing, are Satan and the fallen angels. To them

God has given no heart to desire the advance of his kingdom. True, indeed, he will make all their opposing efforts eventually to accomplish his own gracious purposes, and to exalt and magnify his glory; but this is not their intention; they have no such design. God has separated them from himself and his cause. He has said to them, "I will receive no offering from your hands."

Were God, then, to make a similar declaration concerning any of us, it would be treating us as he treats this dark and disinherited spirit; it would be placing us in spirit already with the Devil and his angels, and might, therefore, be regarded as a foreshadowing of our future doom. Yes, my hearers, the man who has no heart to give his prayers, his exertions, and his contributions towards the spread of the gospel, is to be truly pitied; for his heart is no angel nature; no God-like spirit belongs to him. He only resembles Satan and the fallen spirits. And is not that a curse? May God deliver every one of us from a heart which is closed to Christian charity—a heart which could wish that in the present state of the world the calls for our contributions should be less frequent!

And once more: We should deprecate this exclusion from being allowed to give for the advance of Christ's kingdom, because such a deprivation would not only deprive of present joy, but also of future reward. It would deprive us of one of the greatest and purest enjoyments which is now allowed us. The Christian loves God. In what other way than by imitating his God can he express his feelings of gratitude and love?

"My goodness," says David, "extends not to thee, O God, but to thy saints on earth." We cannot reach God to confer any thing on him. The cattle, as he tells us—the cattle upon a thousand hills are his already; every beast of the forest is his as much before the offering by us as it would be after; and so it is with every thing else. Could we bring all the gold of California's mountains, streams and plains—could we ransack the heart of the earth for all its treasures, and sweep the heavens for their jewelry, to make an offering for God, it would be God's own which we would be giving him. He made them all, and gratitude would feel that in all this she had found no suitable expression. Is it not, then, infinite love for God to come to us in our poverty, and say to us that there is a rich gift which we may bestow upon him, and which he will prize? Is it not a blessing and a joy which will thrill every grateful heart, to know that God will prize our love, and will accept its efforts to recover for him the hearts of his rebellious creatures—will accept them as testimonies of our gratitude for the gift of his Son, and the blood-bought pardon which he has bestowed upon us? Yes, my brethren, this is the great source of Christian enjoyment on earth, that we can do something for him who died for us. Could you have conferred a higher joy on the apostle Paul than to make him a successful minister of Jesus?

Will you not fill with joy, almost too much for earth, the heart of the Christian missionary, by making him instrumental in the salvation of his hearers? I spoke a while since of the sacrifices and the early death of the

female missionaries—of the feelings of pity I had for them, almost leading me to doubt whether they did right in enduring so much. Pity! they objects of pity! Think of their love for their work; think that they felt that all this was for Christ; think of the joy of knowing that they had consecrated life, health, friends, houses and lands for Christ's sake and the gospel, and you will see that we were pitying them for what gave them their highest earthly felicity. And tell me, could you give a higher joy to the Christian parent than to see his children brought to Jesus? No, brethren; and as the strongest expression of our Lord's love for the apostle John was that, while hanging on the cross, he gave to him the care of his mother, so the strongest expression of his love to us, next to his death on the cross for us, is in these words: "Go, my people, and preach my gospel;" and the highest earthly joy is found in compliance therewith.

So also is it with the future awards of the eternal world. Our joy in heaven will indeed be the reward of grace, free grace; but still we are informed that it will be according to our works, or to what we have done for Christ. Our Saviour, in that exhibition which he gives us of the judgment-day, tells us that the sentence is in these words: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me;" and he also declares that a cup of cold water given in his name will not fail of an abundant reward. And even though no judicial notice should be taken in heaven of our deeds of love, would not the consciousness that we, while on earth, devoted life and thought to Him who

sitteth on the throne, be a reward in view of which all earthly honors are as nothing? Will not the mere reflection that we were allowed to be instruments in bringing one single ransomed and redeemed spirit to join in giving the glory of salvation to Jesus—that *we*, ourselves blood-bought, have been allowed, in testimony of our gratitude, to attune another harp to swell the chorus of the everlasting song, be a joy unspeakable and full of glory? Of this, be it remembered, we should be deprived were we not allowed to aid in spreading the kingdom of Christ in this world. All such pleasures would be denied us were God, in his wrath, to say, "I will accept no offering at your hands; I will accomplish my great end without your aid."

I have yet one further illustration and proof of the truth of this position which I cannot avoid mentioning; a proof of fact most clear and most terrible.

The prediction in the text has been fulfilled; the curse here pronounced has descended on Israel as a nation: an offering from them, as the people of God, has been now for eighteen hundred years refused; and you have but to look at their history during all this period to see what is the result. That nation, the most honorable of all the nations of antiquity, whose founder was that Abraham in whom all the nations of the earth have been and still are to be blessed—what has she done for man? What influence has she exerted for good on the rest of the world? Since she was rejected of God, how has she ceased to be a blessing from the hour in which God said, "Henceforth I accept no offering at your hands!" Then were her defenses gone;

the pagan soldier, with the clank of his iron heel, trod her streets and her temple, once hallowed by angels' tread, and by the footsteps of the Son of God; her people, driven from their land, have no home, but are scattered over the globe, and seem, like the broken fragments of some mighty shipwreck, strewed on every shore. God hath not, indeed, taken entirely away from them his revelation: they have the portion once given them; but no longer to them are committed the oracles of God: they have not the volume complete; they have no desire or power to spread the knowledge of Jehovah's name; their presence confers no blessing; and as they bestow no favors, they receive none: they have become a hissing and a by-word, a scorn and a reproach; and if you ask the reason of this, you can find no answer, save that God has refused to accept an offering at their hands. The only way in which, as a nation, they have benefited mankind, is by standing as a dread beacon proclaiming God's truth, while they themselves receive no benefit from their own proclamation. Yes, to have God refuse to allow us to spread the gospel of Jesus is to be disowned of God as his people, and to be almost disowned of man as belonging to the common brotherhood. How different, how very different would have been the history of the Jews, had not this curse fallen upon them!

And now, brethren, though I have had time only to glance at these varied topics, and a wide field yet remains untraversed, have I not made manifest the truth of my position, that the greatest curse which God could inflict in this life upon his people would be to deny

them the pleasure and the privilege of advancing his cause and kingdom? We have seen that it would prevent us from conferring upon our fellow-men any real blessing—that it would exclude us from all sympathy with the plans and purposes of God, making us enemies of God and of man—that it would render this life comparatively worthless and aimless—that it would place us on the same terrible and malevolent platform with Satan and the fallen angels—that it would deprive us of much present joy and all heavenly rewards, and would send us out upon the world like the Jews, a dishonored people, on whose once glorious banners Ichabod was written.

Yes, truly would our glory be departed were God to refuse our missionary offerings. Think for a single moment of the consequences which would ensue at this moment were God to say, in his wrath, to his Church, "I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. Call home your missionaries, close your churches; I ask no song, I will hear no prayer, I will bless no exertions." Would it not be like forbidding the sun to rise and shine upon the labors of men? Were God to forbid us to labor for the support of our bodies, the human family would perish; and were he to forbid the spiritual efforts of his Church, his Church would die, and all the hopes and blessings which she brings would perish with her, and our earth become what the Bible describes hell to be—a place whence love, hope, joy, and peace have departed evermore.

I close with one or two suggested thoughts.

We learn from this subject that the minister of the

gospel who does not give his people full and frequent opportunities to forward the cause of Christ is, in fact, his people's enemy, and robs both them and himself of a great blessing.

2d. We learn that they who neglect to pray for the perishing heathen and the coming of Christ's kingdom, and who find fault with the multiplicity of the calls made on their benevolence where the soul's salvation is involved, are finding fault with their privileges, are preferring Barabbas to Christ, and refusing one of the greatest blessings which God can bestow.

3d. We see that no Christian should be deterred from aiding in the advance of Christ's kingdom by the consideration that he can do but little: that little is too great a privilege to be despised, even though it may be but a cup of cold water. It has sometimes been asked when contributions are being made for the kingdom of Christ, Shall this or that poor man, who is, perchance, himself an object of charity, be requested to give of his penury? I reply in the light of our theme: What has he done that he should be deprived of this privilege? Why should we say to him, "God will not accept an offering at your hands?"

Suppose, when that poor lone widow of whom we read in the gospel, who cast into the treasury of the Lord two mites, being all her living—suppose some kind-hearted friend had met her and said, "You are too poor to contribute," and had turned her away; would it have been a kind act, however kindly intended? What an injury would he have done her! She would have lost the Saviour's blessing and commenda-

tion—lost her honorable place in the Bible—lost the untold influence of her example—lost an inestimable source of satisfaction and eternal joy, long as she shall sit yonder at her Saviour's feet. Yes, those two mites ungiven would have taken a jewel from her crown of glory, and a note of joy from her harp.

And lastly: If the Church of Christ prize not as she ought the blessing of being allowed to make her offerings to the Lord, may not our offended God say to her now, as he did to Israel, "I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hand?" Israel fell because of unbelief. Remember that we stand only by faith. It is possible—nay, my brethren, if we despise our mercies and neglect our privileges, it is certain that God will reject us, as he did Israel of old: if we refuse to preach the gospel to every creature, God will take from us the privilege, and bestow it upon others.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY.

We chronicle to night the passage of the twenty-sixth year of the history of the Foreign Missionary Society of New-York and Brooklyn. By the good hand of God upon us, none of the officers of the Society have been removed by death. The usual monthly meetings at the Tract House have been held, with no abatement of interest. The Directors of the Society have been active and successful in obtaining and distributing missionary intelligence; and efforts have been constantly made to increase the zeal of the churches and of individual Christians in the divine work it has undertaken.

By the Treasurer's Report we learn that the contributions of the several churches have reached the sum of twenty-three thousand dollars. It is not a little encouraging to remark the increase from year to year since 1849. In the year 1850 the amount in round numbers was $14,200; in 1851, $16,300; in 1852, $18,100; this year about $23,000—an increase during the past year of nearly $5,000. It is our pleasure also to record the success of the Society in securing the appointment of a full Secretary of the American Board to reside and labor among us. This was deemed essential to the prosperity of the cause of missions in our churches. The fact, that during the years subsequent to the decease of the Rev. Dr. Armstrong, the receipts of this Society made no relative advance whatever, while those of kindred institutions were increased from twenty to eighty per cent. in the same field, was urged before the Board, and afterwards before the Special Committee to whom the matter was referred, as one of commanding importance in its bearings upon this appointment. Besides, the *peculiar* advantages and difficulties of this field—the immense resources of the churches, so imperfectly developed — the prospective and almost indefinite enlargement of Christian power in this emporium of commerce and capital city of our land—the existence and full representation among us of Benevolent Societies, whose spirit so animates and blesses the churches—the fact that we had once enjoyed the services of a Corresponding Secretary of sacred and precious memory—these and other like considerations were the basis of an appeal to the Parent Society for the appointment of another whose *official* position and confidential relations to the Prudential Committee would give him every advantage in his labors among our churches. The Board yielded to our wishes, and appointed a person, Rev. George W. Wood, of the Fourth Presbytery, New-York, to occupy this post peculiarly prepared in Providence for it. It would be out of place here to speak of those mental and Christian qualities which commend him to our esteem and sympathy. But there are one or two things which can be mentioned, and which ought to be

known. He has for many years labored with honor and success in the missionary cause, and was about to return to his place—temporarily vacated on account of the illness of his wife—when the Board retained him in this country to occupy this position. We have thus a guaranty in regard to his spirit—his *love* for the *cause* of missions. We may be assured that his mind and heart are imbued, enlarged, and quickened by no ordinary zeal for the work. Then, too, his sphere of labor abroad was at the centre and capital of the most interesting and promising missionary operations on the face of the earth—I refer to the Armenian missions: no other section of the heathen world embraces so many and such thrilling elements of success. To no other are the thoughts, and prayers, and hopes of the American Board so earnestly directed. Our Secretary has lived and labored on that field. Its geography—the character of its social and civil institutions—the capabilities of its population—its relations to Asia on the one hand, and to Europe on the other—the character, localities, and prospects of the missionaries now employed on that territory, are known to him as they could not be known by any mind, however gifted and comprehensive, who had not enjoyed the same advantages. These are circumstances which give a special interest to the appointment; and the Society would cordially introduce and commend him to the sympathies and support of the churches. He comes as a stranger to us. His long residence in Constantinople, while it has so eminently qualified him for the office, has also imposed the obligation upon us to open wide our hearts, and houses, and churches to him, to endeavor to make his difficult labors among us the more pleasant and cheerful and successful.

As this Report is printed and circulated with the annual sermon, and reaches nearly every family connected with the churches represented in the Society, the Directors would take this opportunity of suggesting two or three subjects of practical duty to the churches and ministers they represent:

(1.) The *first* relates to a more general and united system in the churches, both as to the *mode* and *time* of taking up collections. It is exceedingly important, not only that there should be a regular and thorough, but a simultaneous effort in all the churches; and Mr. Wood is about to undertake to secure such an arrangement. We trust that in this attempt he will have the hearty and intelligent coöperation of all the pastors and officers in the churches. In a circular letter, issued eighteen months ago, and extensively distributed, we used the following language on this general subject, which has lost none of its significance since that time: "*A system of contributions* in each church which shall operate universally and steadily; which shall search out all the members, and create an interest and a sense of responsbility in all; which shall honor the offering of the poorest as well as that of the richest; such a system, we feel, is *absolutely essential* to the future success and progress of the American Board. If this institution is to be what the inward witness of the Spirit of God in every Christian declares it ought to be; if it is to occupy fields that are now

open and ripe for the harvest, and which, unless occupied, will be found to have been open to the ingress of infidelity and atheism, there must be a marked and prompt improvement in the spirit and offerings of the churches it represents. And in what part of the land should such an improvement be commenced sooner than in this? The example of what locality would tell more beneficially upon the country than that in which this Association is planted?"

(2.) The second relates to the monthly concert for prayer. While it is the common testimony of those who statedly attend it, that no service of the Church is more useful and blessed, the lamentable fact remains that there is none in which the Church, as a body, has less real interest. There is something wanting in regard to it. It is earnestly hoped that this meeting will receive the special attention of the pastors, and that whatever can be done to enlist the prayers and sympathies of the members of the churches will be done. The future vigor and enlargement of the Board in no small degree is dependent upon an improvement in the attendance upon the monthly concert for prayer.

(3.) The other subject has reference to the meeting for prayer in the afternoon of the first Monday of every month. It is not designed that this should be in any degree a substitute for the concert of the evening. On the other hand, its object is to subserve and magnify this latter. The latest intelligence from all parts of the missionary world is received by the Secretary from the Missionary House in Boston, and communicated at that meeting for the benefit of the evening services. And its principal end is secured when each church has its representative there, who shall report its details at the monthly concert. We hope that such churches as have not enjoyed the benefits of this meeting will no longer be deprived of the pleasure and profit they might thus receive.

We enter upon another year with thanksgiving for the Divine blessings in that which has passed, and with good hope for the future. The friends of the noble institution we represent should see eye to eye, and be one in *spirit*—one in purpose. There are those that augur ill for the growth and augmenting power of the American Board. It becomes us to use every proper exertion to cement the union of the various denominations which coöperate in this grandest national exemplification of the Christian religion in our country or in the world. The Word of God bids us go forward in this missionary work; and we verily believe that firm union, and an active Christian, unsectarian spirit on the part of the lovers of this institution, will do more to command the Divine blessing and avert the anticipated evils than perhaps any thing else. Thus, the clouds that appear on the horizon will prove to be not storm-clouds of the Divine displeasure, to alarm and dishearten us, but rather symbols of success—the chariots of the Lord, designed for the overthrow, not of this most beneficent Institution, but of the enemies of His Son.

THOMAS H. SKINNER, Jr.,

Corresponding Secretary.

THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF NEW-YORK AND BROOKLYN

In account current with their Treasurer, ALMON MERWIN.

		Cr.		
From April 1, 1852, *to* March 31, 1853.	By Cash, from the following sources:			
	Allen street Presbyterian Church, New-York	$137	07	
	Bleecker street " " "	781	00	
	Brick Presb. Ch., of which for the debt $150	911	88	
	Broadway Tabernacle Church,	284	24	
	Central Presb. Ch., of which for the debt $150	1,016	82	
	Church of the Puritans, " $400	454	60	
	Eastern Congregational Church,	31	57	
	Eighth Avenue Presbyterian Church,	25	00	
	Eleventh " "	109	34	
	Fourteenth street Presb. Ch., of which for the debt $400	997	38	
	Harlem Presbyterian Church	53	47	
	Houston street " "	19	50	
	Mercer street Presb. Ch., of which for the debt $2,350.	6,726	86	
	Madison Avenue Presb. Ch., of which for the debt $100	100	00	
	Madison Square Presbyterian Church	50	00	
	Manhattanville " "	6	44	
	North " "	30	00	
	Pearl street " "	257	57	
	Presb. Ch. on University Place, of which for the debt $400	850	00	
	Presb. Ch., cor. Fifth Avenue and 19th street	70	00	
	Seventh Presbyterian Church	190	53	
	Spring street " "	128	17	
	Tenth " "	112	45	
	Thirteenth st. " "	39	34	
	West " "	368	59	
	Sundry donations in New-York and Brooklyn, of which for the debt $500	1,363	36	
				15,115 18
	Bedford Congregational Church, Brooklyn	15	10	
	Bridge street " " "	80	00	
	Central Presbyterian " "	11	38	
	Church of the Pilgrims, of which for the debt $700,	2,420	21	
	Clinton Avenue Cong. Ch., of which for the debt $250.	351	31	
	First Presb. Ch., of which for the debt $300	935	87	
	Fulton Avenue Congregational Church	60	00	
	Plymouth " "	303	12	
	South Presb. Ch., of which for the debt $900	2,476	94	
	South Congregational Church	16	52	
	Second Presb. Ch., of which for the debt $250	942	18	
	Third Presbyterian Church	111	70	
				7,724 33
	First Presbyterian Church of Williamsburg, L. I.			72 00
				$22,911 51

Dr.

From April 1, 1852,	To Cash Paid for 500 Lithographic Circulars.....	$17 50	
	" " 3000 copies Dr. Smith's Sermon,	127 00	
			144 50
to March 31, 1853.	To Cash entered in my account at sundry times with H. Hill, Treasurer of the A. B. C. F. M..		22,767 01
			$22,911 51

E. & O. E.,

New-York, March 31, 1853.

A. Merwin, *Treasurer.*

Examined and found correct.

O. E. Wood,
Walter S. Griffith, } *Auditors.*

Of which from New-York for the debt.....$4,450 00
" " Brooklyn, " " 2,400 00

$6,850,000

RECEIPTS OF THE SOCIETY.

The following statement exhibits the receipts of the Foreign Missionary Society of New-York and Brooklyn, from its organization in 1827 to April, 1850:

From 1827 to April, 1836, (nine years,)			$86,931 28
For the year ending April,	1837		19,068 72
" " "	1838		11,195 53
" " March,	1839		12,433 07
" " April,	1840		10,131 33
" " March,	1841		11,721 17
" " April,	1842		15,937 73
" " "	1843		10,432 42
" " "	1844		14,018 10
" " "	1845		11,974 88
" " "	1846		10,425 10
" " March,	1847		9,867 59
" " "	1848		11,834 70
" " April,	1849		19,536 56
" " "	1850		14,217 58
Total in twenty-three years			$269,725 76

RECEIPTS FOR THE YEARS 1851, 1852, 1853.

	Year ending April 13, 1851.	Year ending March 31, 1852.	Year ending March 31, 1853.
Allen street Presbyterian Church, New-York	$151 17	$129 00	$137 07
Bleecker street " " "	896 22	875 06	781 00
Brainerd " " "	176 71	101 30	——
Brick " " "	666 75	933 14	911 88
Broadway Tabernacle, Cong. Ch., "	265 45	258 01	284 24
Central Presbyterian Church, "	903 22	687 40	1,016 82
Church of the Puritans, Cong., "	851 66	1,252 27	454 60
Duane street Presbyterian Church, "	20 00	——	——
Eastern Congregational " "	17 67	19 09	31 57
Eighth Avenue Presbyterian " "	——	25 00	25 00
Eleventh " " "	78 36	88 85	109 34
Hammond street Cong. " "	5 00	——	——
Fourteenth street Presb. " "	——	469 73	997 38
Harlem " " "	31 00	76 60	53 47
Houston street " " "	98 55	25 50	19 50
Mercer street " " "	3,149 95	5,139 11	6,726 86
Madison Avenue " " "	——	100 00	100 00
Madison Square " " "	——	——	50 00
Manhattanville " " "	——	——	6 44
North " " "	19 52	——	30 00
Pearl street " " "	257 20	174 74	257 57
Presb. Church on University Place, "	393 00	250 00	850 00
Presb. Ch., cor. Fifth Av. & 19th st., "	——	——	70 00
Seventh Presbyterian Church, "	287 18	203 77	190 53
Sixth street " " "	347 90	——	——
Spring street " " "	198 27	81 76	128 17
Tenth " " "	366 40	293 65	112 45
Thirteenth street " " "	65 95	38 06	39 34
West " " "	496 20	406 60	368 59
	$9,743 33	$11,628 64	$13,751 82
Bedford Congregational Church, Brooklyn...	12 44	11 39	15 10
Bridge street " " " ...	146 11	123 68	80 00
Central Presbyterian " " ...	——	17 12	11 38
Church of the Pilgrims, Cong., " ...	1,655 73	2,065 23	2,420 21
Clinton Avenue, " " ...	27 00	40 00	351 31
First Presbyterian Church, " ...	751 45	830 58	935 87
Fulton Avenue Cong. " " ...	——	45 00	60 00
Plymouth " " " ...	493 28	452 46	303 12
South Presbyterian " " ...	1,036 12	1,219 32	2,476 94
Second " " " ...	821 18	456 28	942 18
South Congregational " " ...	——	——	16 52
Third Presbyterian " " ...	100 00	138 63	111 70
	$5,043 31	$5,399 69	$7,724 33
Sundry donations in New-York and Brooklyn.	$1,526 24	$1,012 74	$1,363 36
First Presbyterian Church, Williamsburg.....	$40 00	$68 75	$72 00
Total.....	$16,352 88	$18,109 82	$22,911 51

LIST OF OFFICERS

FOR THE YEAR 1853.

PRESIDENT.

JASPER CORNING.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

ANSON G. PHELPS, | JOHN RANKIN,
CHARLES J. STEDMAN, | DAVID HOADLEY.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

REV. THOMAS H. SKINNER, JR.

RECORDING SECRETARY.

ALMON MERWIN.

TREASURER.

ALMON MERWIN.

DIRECTORS.

Allen Street Presbyterian Church, ...M. T. HEWIT, EDWARD C. CHAPIN.
Bleecker Street " " ....CHARLES GOULD, EDWARD CHESTER.
Fourteenth Street " " .....W. E. DODGE, J. F. JOY.
Brick " " ....A. L. ELY, C. H. MERRY.
Broadway Tabernacle " ....W. G. WEST, ISRAEL MINOR.
Central Presbyterian " ....W. P. COOK, SAMUEL W. STEBBINS.
Church of the Puritans, ...O. E. WOOD, H. O. PINNEO.
Eastern Congregational " ....STEPHEN CUTTER, LEWIS CHICHESTER.
Eighth Avenue Presbyterian " ....HENRY D. CRANE, R. R. WOOD.
Eleventh " " ....J. E. MARSHALL, E. B. LITTELL.
Fifth Av. & Nineteenth St. Pr. Ch., ...WM. G. LAMBERT, JAMES M. HALSTED.
Harlem Presbyterian Church, ...E. KETCHUM, JAMES RIKER, JR.
Houston Street Presbyterian Church, ...S. DERRICKSON, DAVID STEVENS.
Mercer Street " " ....ANSON G. PHELPS, JR., W. W. CHESTER.
Madison Square " ...F. BULL, A. O. VAN LENNEP.

North Presbyterian Church, ...O. H. Lee, James Reeve.
Presb. Church, University Place, ...W. W. Stone, J. K. Myers.
Seventh Presbyterian Church, ...Charles Merrill, H. B. Littell.
Spring Street " " ....Joseph S. Holt, Wm. Demerest.
Thirteenth Street Presb. Church, ...Jno. C. Hines, Dan. Knight.
West " " ....Lewis E. Jackson, Benj. Salter.

Bedford Cong. Church, Brooklyn, ...D. O. Caulkins, Edward T. Goodall.
Bridge st. " " " ....Wm. Vail, Clark Jacobs.
Central Presb. " " ....Charles C. Mudge, D. J. Ledyard.
Clinton Av. Cong. " " ....S. Davenport, James W. Raynor.
Church of the Pilgrims, " ....Alfred S. Barnes, Chas. P. Baldwin.
First Presbyterian Church, " ....R. J. Thorne, Henry Redfield.
Plymouth Cong. " " ....J. Tasker Howard, H. C. Bowen.
Second Presbyterian " " ....Charles Clarke, Lucius Hopkins.
South " " " ....Walter S. Griffith, Jno. Milton Smith.
South Cong. " " ....S. W. Grant, Solomon Freeman.
Third Presbyterian " " ....W. W. Hurlbut, Jno. C. Halsey, M.D.
Fulton Av. Cong. " " ....F. W. Burke, Alfred Smithers.

First Presb. Church, Williamsburg, ...Wm. Hammill, J. W. Buckley.
First Cong. " " ....

5.

The Relation of Faith to Missions.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT TROY, NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 7, 1852,

BEFORE THE

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS,

AT THEIR

FORTY-THIRD ANNUAL MEETING.

BY LEONARD BACON, D. D.
OF NEW HAVEN, CONN.

BOSTON:
PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN, 42 CONGRESS ST.
1852.

SERMON.

In other meetings of this great missionary convocation, business is to be transacted, reports are to be presented and discussed, and various inquiries are to be prosecuted respecting our plans and methods of evangelization. But this evening we meet exclusively for the higher purpose of worship and Christian edification. We are here that we may bring ourselves, with our great work upon us, into the immediate and felt presence of Him who heareth prayer, and that we may receive from the ministration of his word some appropriate lesson of instruction, admonition or encouragement. He who by your appointment, fathers and brethren, speaks to you on this occasion, is required to speak not as a debater to aid the progress of discussion and the dispatch of business, not as a lecturer to unfold the philosophy, or to trace out the incidental bearings of the missionary work, but simply as a minister of the word of God. Yet, on the other hand, it is

of every Christian who does not wholly dishonor the Christian name.

What I propose, is to speak of the missionary enterprise under this aspect. Inasmuch as it is distinctively Christian, it is essentially an enterprise and work of faith. So far as it is simply and truly what it professes to be, the enterprise of converting the world to Christ, it must needs derive its motives, its supports and encouragements, its steadfast hope, from beyond the sphere of the things which are seen, and must look habitually at the things which are unseen and eternal. In order to sustain itself, it must walk by faith, not by sight. This is the point to be illustrated in the present discourse. How is it that, in this work of going into all the world and preaching the gospel to every creature, we walk by faith?

I. We are constrained to walk by faith in this work of evangelizing the nations, because the enterprise presupposes, as its starting point, a full conviction that the gospel is a true revelation from God. Here our enterprise begins. If any ask us why we concern ourselves about the propagation of the gospel, our first and most comprehensive answer is, because the gospel is true. God who spake to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son. In the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, we have a series of facts and testimonies in which God is revealed, and a way of salvation for sinners is laid open. In these holy records, things unseen are made known to us;

the veil is lifted, as it were, which hides eternity; the relations of the soul to its Creator, and the ends for which it has its being, are made palpable to the conscience; and men, receiving the testimony and believing it, become acquainted with God, not merely as an abstract philosophic theory which explains and harmonizes the phenomena of the universe, nor as the conclusion of an argument which they cannot logically resist; not as a necessity of their intelligent and moral nature, nor as the objective creation of that mysterious yearning which must have something for the soul to fear and worship; but as revealed through the medium of distinct and intelligible facts. We believe these facts; we hold them as certainties, and therefore we undertake to publish them and to spread the knowledge of them among all nations. Our enterprise founds itself, in the first instance, on a firm confidence in "this faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" for it is nothing else than the attempt to propagate that conviction through the world. Thus the missionary work, in the very simplest conception of it, is a work of faith. It does not walk by sight. It does not found itself upon the things that are seen. It accepts the gospel as a divine revelation to mankind. It rests upon the conviction that the gospel is truth of infinite moment to the world.

But there are also definite and particular views of things unseen, certain specific exercises of faith, by which this great work is justified, and which

sustain and encourage us in the enterprise. For example, to men who regard the matter only in the light of philosophy, our undertaking seems preposterous and impracticable, even on the supposition that the religion which we attempt to propagate is the true religion. 'Christianity,' they say, 'is the religion of civilized and intellectual nations only. Its doctrines are such as exercise the loftiest and most cultivated intellects. Look at the theology taught in our schools, set forth in our confessions of faith, expounded in our pulpits; how preposterous the notion of carrying such a theology to men of other races, to barbarous men, to men who have no power of grasping abstractions, and who have no conception of anything which does not strike their senses! How preposterous the idea of carrying to painted warriors of the wilderness, to the tatooed islanders of the Pacific, to Hottentots or Tartars, that body of religious doctrines which is contained in Calvin's Institutes or Hopkins's System of Divinity! How unreasonable the expectation, that such specimens of our common human nature will be brought to feel an interest in a religion made up of doctrines so elevated, so abstract, so difficult even to minds invigorated by the discipline of study and refined by civilized culture! These degraded and barbarous races must first be subjected to some humanizing influence, and to some process of intellectual renovation, before they can receive the doctrines of Protestant Evangelical Christianity. Meanwhile they must be addressed

through the medium of their senses. They must have a religion of ceremonies. Give them pictures then, and crucifixes, for the culture and development of religious sensibility, instead of the doctrine of an invisible and spiritual God, who must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. Give them the mystic efficacy of the baptismal water, instead of the doctrine of regeneration. Give them the wafer duly consecrated, instead of the doctrine of justification by faith. Give them the easy and salutary lesson of subjection to priestly authority, instead of appeals to judgment and conscience, and the doctrine of immediate and personal responsibility to God. And when they shall cease to be barbarians, when they shall have attained to some higher mark on the scale of intellectual and moral development, then they will be capable of a more spiritual religion.'

Such, very naturally, are the reasonings of those who, while they admit the truth of the Christian system in general, regard the propagation of the gospel in no higher light than that of philosophical speculation. The answer to all such reasonings is, that in thus undertaking to convert the world to Christ, we walk by faith, not by sight. For,

II. This missionary work is a work of faith, inasmuch as it assumes, not only that the gospel is true, and therefore ought to be published through the world, but also that the gospel is adapted to the universal need of human nature, and is therefore capable of being universally propagated. In other

words, the principle on which Paul acted, and which gave him courage to preach the gospel at Rome, is the principle which makes us ready to preach the same gospel, in all the world, to every creature. The principle is this, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." The gospel, when fairly exhibited by patient teaching, and by its natural and unostentatious showing of itself in the form of living character, can make its way into the most benighted human mind, and can become effectual to touch the latent springs of sensibility in the most degraded and uncultured soul. The mere philosopher, in his speculations on the propagation and progress of Christianity, is prone to forget that the matter of the Christian religion, as it is first proposed to attention and to faith, is not abstract or scientific, but distinctively historical, and is accordingly level to every apprehension. Is there any land or language in which the simple historic religion of the Bible cannot be made intelligible? The story of the creation and the apostacy; the story of the world's wickedness and of the world's destruction by the deluge; the long and eventful story of the people whom God chose for his own, whom he guarded and taught and nurtured, and who requited his bounty with so much unthankfulness and disobedience; in a word, the comprehensive story in which all the lessons of the Old Testament are involved, is everywhere intelligible;

and wherever that story finds its way, there the idea of God's true character begins to be shaped in the mind, and those sensibilities which are essential to the knowledge of sin and of salvation from sin, begin to be developed. The story of Jesus Christ, "God manifest in the flesh;" the story of Bethlehem and Nazareth, and of him in whom dwelt all the fullness of the godhead bodily while yet he had not where to lay his head; the story of Gethsemane and of Calvary; the story of the crucifixion, and of that new sepulchre, and of that rising from the dead, and of that going up to reign in the invisible glory; that story can be told in every language, and there is no human soul so degraded as to be incapable of learning from it the mystery of godliness. Wherever the gospel story goes, carrying with it the entire historical religion of the Old and New Testaments, there the human soul awakes from the lethargy of even the profoundest ignorance; there the mind begins to inquire and meditate on things that are infinite and eternal; there the vast problems of our mysterious existence, over which philosophy wearies itself in vain, begin to receive attention and to find their solution; there the living oracles, explored and studied, give out a light that shines through all the realms of thought; there the sublimest doctrines of the Christian revelation, the doctrines that underlie the story of redemption and are incorporated with it, will have their place in the experience of believers, and while speculation is baffled with their vastness, faith will

grasp them as realities. This is the adaptedness of the gospel to the universal need of human nature. It lies beyond the ken of any philosophy, that does not know the power as well as the form of godliness. But this we take for a first principle, when we undertake to preach the gospel to every creature. In the comprehensiveness of our enterprise, as in the fellowship of the redeemed, "there is neither Greek nor Jew, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free;" for our work presupposes that as Christ died for all, so wherever there is a soul with human faculties and sensibilities, there is in that soul a capacity of being moved by the story of Christ and him crucified. Thus we walk by faith, not by sight.

There is another aspect of the missionary work, which does not present itself to any but a believing mind. Admitting that the body of facts and doctrines, called Christianity, is true, the man who contemplates the question of its progress in no other light than that of human speculation, will naturally argue that this religion, making its way in the world as a system of thought and belief, must make its way under the same conditions and chances with any other body of opinions equally sustained by evidence; and that it will be liable to be overwhelmed and even extinguished, in some of those great and often unaccountable mutations which make up so much of human history. No religion, as yet, has ever become universal. All religions, whatever measure of truth they have had in them, have been liable

to revolution and decay. One system of thought and faith has been superseded by another, which in its turn has passed away; nor are such changes always for the better. Christianity itself emerged, at its origin, from a quarter from which no great revolution could have been expected; and who can tell that some new system may not come forth, from some source not now dreamed of, and triumph over Christendom? To all such reasonings, the mind that thinks in accordance with that faith which is the evidence of things not seen, has a conclusive answer. For,

III. The undertaking to convert the world to Christ is a work of faith, inasmuch as it rests on the basis of Christ's commission and promises to his disciples.

If we went forth to such an enterprise as this, unsent—if the work were simply, and in all respects, a voluntary undertaking of our own—if we were acting under no guidance other than our own wisdom, and under no authority other than our own will—we could have no assurance of success. But we remember, for our encouragement, that the church of Christ, in the sense in which we are laboring for its extension, is not a merely human institution. Every particular church—every organized and governed local society of Christian worshipers—however conformed to scriptural principles and models, is, in one view, a human organization; there is no certainty, no divine pledge, that its candlestick will not be removed, or that its light

will not become darkness. Any definite confederation of churches, under whatever system of ecclesiastical laws, is a human arrangement; it may live and flourish, and be filled from age to age with the light of a pure and saving gospel; or, on the other hand, it may become corrupt, it may apostatize from the truth, it may perish and be dissolved. But there is a church, which has no parochial or national boundaries, and which is defined by no human regulations or arrangements,—the Church of the living God, "built on the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone;"—the divine institution which Christ announced to his disciples when he said, "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." In this sense of the word, the church is universal and immortal; it is the goodly fellowship of the apostles, the noble army of Christ's witnesses, the commonwealth of the saints, the glorious community of which Christ is the living head, and which includes all those in every age and clime, whom faith unites to their Redeemer. It is in this sense of the word, and not in any narrow, local, national, or sectarian sense, that we are laboring to extend the church. The coming of the kingdom of God—that is, the extension of the church considered as the universal commonwealth of the redeemed—is what we pray for, what we labor for; and in this work we act under Christ's commission and with the assurance of his presence. It is his work; he is in it, the Captain

of our salvation; he, personally though invisibly present, is leading his hosts from conquering to conquer; and "the gates of hell" — the councils and enterprises of Death and Hades—shall never triumph over him.

Is not Christ with us in this enterprise? If he is not, all our faith is vain, and our hope also is vain. If he is not with us, personally with us—our guide, our strength, and the assurance of our success—what dependence can there be upon his testimonies? The doctrine of Christ's continued and unfailing presence in his church—in the universal spiritual church, which is his body, "the fullness of him who filleth all in all"—is one of the most explicit lessons of the New Testament. What is that doctrine? Christ himself, in almost the only discourse of his which seems expressly to anticipate the organized association of his disciples under any distinct form of religious polity, says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I, in the midst of them." [Matt. xviii. 20.] So, when he speaks to his disciples of his departure, and promises to give them another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, he adds, "I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you." [John xiv. 18; see also the following verses.] "Ye shall see me." "Ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will

come to him, and make our abode with him." Such were the promises and assurances which our Savior gave before his crucifixion. See now the fulfillment of the promise. He dies and is buried, and on the third day he is "declared to be the Son of God, with power, by the resurrection from the dead." On that third day, and afterwards from time to time for the space of forty days, he manifests himself to his desponding and incredulous disciples; they see his human form; they hear his human voice; their intercourse with him is renewed; and thus his living, personal presence in his church, becomes, to them not merely a matter of expectation, but a matter of fact; not merely a matter of faith resting upon the promises he had given them, but a matter testified to them by their outward senses. He shows himself, now, to a solitary weeper in the gray morning twilight of that first day of the week on which he rose; now to two disciples walking together, and talking with downcast hearts of the things which had happened. Once and again, especially on the first day of the week, the disciples are assembled in an upper chamber, with the doors shut for fear of their enemies; and lo! suddenly, there he is in the midst of them, according to his promise. Thus, by these repeated manifestations, and by the manner in which he manifests himself, he makes them familiar with the fact, not of his resurrection only, but of his constant though invisible presence with them. He has not left them orphans, but has come to them. The world seeth him no more, but they see him. It is only to

them, and not to the world, that he thus manifests himself. He is with them, and with them only. He loves them; and they grow strong and joyous in the consciousness that he is with them, a living and mighty presence, invisible and unknown to the world that has rejected him. At last, after some forty days of frequent intercourse with them by these visible manifestations, he is "taken up," and passes finally out of their sight. But before he thus withdraws from their sight and from the cognizance of every outward sense, he gives them a renewed and explicit commission to attempt the propagation of his gospel through the world, and he renews the promise that in that work he will be unfailingly present with them. "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo! I am with you alway even to the end of the world." [Matt. xxviii. 18-20.] What was the meaning of that promise given in those circumstances, given in such a connection with his final departure out of their sight? It was as if he had said, Ye shall see me no more with the outward eye; these manifestations of my presence are sufficient, as evidence of my resurrection from the dead, and of my mediatorial power on earth and in heaven; and henceforth my presence will no more be cognizable to sense, yet I am with you alway, even to the end of the world. "So then, after *the*

Lord had spoken to them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God; and they went forth and preached everywhere, *the Lord* working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." [Mark xvi. 19, 20.] In some sense then,—in some sense distinct from the general doctrine of the divine omnipresence,—it is a doctrine of the New Testament that Christ is always present with his church; always present with his believing followers in their consultations and enterprises for his cause, though only two or three are gathered together; always present, especially in the work of preaching the gospel to every creature. However we may attempt to expound this doctrine, to define its consistency with our philosophy, to guard it against the perversions of enthusiasm and of superstition, or to bring it into the form of a logical and scientific statement, we must take heed that we do not explain it away, or paralyze its inspiring potency on the believing mind.

Our enterprise, then, of spreading the gospel through the world, is not our own, but Christ's. It rests upon this great Christian fact,—the fact that the risen and reigning Savior lives in the life of his church, reigns in its affection and fidelity, and conquers in its progress. Christ is with us in this work as really; his power, his love, his guardianship, are as really with us; his sympathy in our vicissitudes, and his interest in our success and ultimate victory, are as real, as if the sacred form that

was so often exhibited to the adoring gaze of his disciples before the day of his ascension, were visible among us from age to age,—as if the same voice which uttered the Sermon on the Mount, which prayed at Gethsemane, which groaned at Calvary, and which gave out its parting accents on the eastern slope of Olivet, were heard to-day in our assemblies. Faith realizes that the work is Christ's; that his commission is its warrant; and that his presence in it is the assurance of its ultimate success. There may be times of discouragement; defeat may follow upon defeat; the enemy may come like a flood in his hour and in the power of darkness; but, knowing that Christ hath sent us and is with us, we will not despair, for "by faith, not by sight," is the word upon our banners. The waves may roar, and men's hearts may fail them for fear; but Christ is with us in the ship; all that is hazarded is his; and when the wind and the storm cease to subserve his interest and to fulfill his word, the voice of his power shall awe them into silence.

But we are already approaching another aspect of the missionary work, and one which deserves to be, in its turn, distinctly regarded. To a mind which looks at the subject only in a theoretical view, and in the lights of merely human wisdom, the prodigious disproportion between our enterprise and our resources, between the end at which we aim and the means by which we hope to attain that end, may seem to convict us of enthusiasm, not to

say absurdity. Our field is the world, a world that lieth in wickedness; and what are we and what are our resources, that we should undertake the work of extending through this whole world the kingdom and dominion of the Redeemer? All sorts of hindrances and obstacles are in our way. How large a portion of mankind are sunk in utter barbarism! How profound is the darkness of popular ignorance in the greater part of even the civilized world! How adverse to human progress, and especially to the influence of the gospel, are almost all existing governments! How much of injustice and organized wickedness is everywhere wrought into the very structure of society! How strong too are the diverse systems of false religion which cover the earth as with the shadow of death! how strong in their antiquity, in their association with government, in the wealth and the craft of their various priesthoods, and in their connection with the daily outward and inward life of the nations they enslave! And what resources have we for the conquest of a world like this? In one way of viewing things, the contributions made for the spread of the gospel through the world, may seem quite considerable. Perhaps half a million of dollars, or even more, is annually contributed in the United States for the various departments of the foreign missionary work as carried on by different Christian organizations. Perhaps not less than three times that amount is annually contributed for the same work by the churches of Great Britain. Such are our material

resources for the enterprise of publishing the gospel in the translation of its written records, and of preaching the gospel by the living voice, in every language and to every people under heaven. If such resources seem large to us, if they seem in any measure adequate to the end in view, it is enough to remember that a single year of war, like our own late war for the conquest of Mexico, involves more expenditure of treasure and of life than the contributions of a generation, at the present rate, for the conversion of the world. What are these few hundred men and women, scattered here and there among the countless millions of the unevangelized in Turkey, Persia, India, China, Africa and the Islands? Can they revolutionize governments and emancipate the nations? Can they demolish the fabrics which the superstition of ages has erected and consolidated? Can they produce any where any permanent effect?

Such doubts and objections are natural, whenever the mind falls into an unbelieving mood of thought. The answer with which we meet them—the only conclusive answer—is that in this work we walk by faith, not by sight. Or, putting the answer into the form adapted to this particular class of objections, we say,

IV. Our faith, in taking up and pursuing the work of the world's conversion, rests upon God's revealed plan and counsel concerning the world's redemption. In other words, the missionary work, in the true spirit and meaning of it, believes, and is

sustained by the belief, that the entire providence of God in this world, including all the special outpourings of his Spirit from time to time, is conducted with reference to the subjection of the world to Christ.

The view which recognizes God's redeeming and restoring work as involved in the arrangements of his providence, and developed along the track of ages past, is the Christian view of history. Without Christ and his mission—without Christ's conflict with the powers of darkness, and his final and predestined victory over all his enemies — without Christ's kingdom, spreading in the world from age to age, and ultimately filling the world with righteousness and peace and joy,—the history of this world is only a dark and tangled maze. Without the knowledge of Christ, and of God's counsel concerning the kingdom and work of Christ, there is no clue to guide the inquirer through the endless labyrinth. But going up into the mount of vision with the prophets of God, and there beholding Christ transfigured and glorified, and thence looking forth upon the ages which history has chronicled, we see events in their connection with God's government of the world and with the designs which he is pursuing, and lo! the "mighty maze" is not "without a plan."

This recognition of the method and system of God's universal providence, is the Christian view of the world as it lies before us, and of the events now passing into history. To the eye of faith, Christ is

continually the central figure in the ever changing world-panorama. God's decree concerning his anointed King, [Ps. ii. 7–9,] "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee: ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession; thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel"—stands unreversed; and all the progress of events is the working of God's providence to bring to pass that irreversible decree.

This, too, is the Christian view of what is yet to be. The light of prophecy from ancient time streams on, beyond the present, into the remotest future. Christ, in his mediatorial work of glory—Christ, in his kingdom among men—Christ, subduing and renewing all things, and going on with ceaseless progress to restore the ruin caused by the world's apostasy from God, is in all coming time no less than in the ages past, the centre in the system of universal providence. Around him all events however fortuitous they may seem, and all influences however adverse in their nature and their immediate bearing, have their places in a due subordination to the plan which he is executing. And as time performs its cycles, all things move on with him toward the predestined consummation.

> "Thus heavenward all things tend; for all were once,
> Perfect, and all must be at length restored.
> So God has greatly purposed, who would else
> In his dishonored work himself endure
> Dishonor, and be wronged without redress."

See then how far we are from depending on our own means and resources, as if they were adequate to the work of subduing the world to Christ. The very grandeur of the undertaking requires us to walk by faith, not by sight. We walk by faith in this great fact of the Christian religion, the fact of God's purpose to bring the whole world, in the fullness of time, under the dominion of his Son. All our plans and endeavors, all our hopes of success, are grounded on our confidence in that great scheme of providence which he has been pursuing in all past ages, and which he will continue to pursue till the new earth shall be arrayed in more than all the beauty and bloom of the original paradise. Our work is simply that of serving God in the gospel of his Son. In order to the universal establishment of the kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, the gospel of the kingdom must be published everywhere; and the revealed method of God's operation for the completion of his great design, requires that the gospel shall be published not by miracle but by human instrumentality—published by the process of giving to all nations the translated record of the Divine revelation, and teaching all men to read and understand it for themselves—published by the living voice proclaiming the story of Christ and the message of divine invitation in every language and to every creature. This is the work to which God calls us as his servants, as the stewards whom he has intrusted with the gospel for the world, as the redeemed followers

of Christ. We are to publish the gospel every where as we have opportunity, to the extent of our resources, according to our best ability and skill; and the result is sure, because the result is his—his heart is fixed upon it; his immutable purpose has determined it. With the same word of prophecy with which he encouraged his people of old, when, few and feeble, they were building the holy city and the temple in the presence of their enemies, he now encourages us, [Zach. iv. 6, 7,] "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth the headstone with shoutings, crying, Grace! grace unto it!"

The work, then, is not ours alone, nor need we be dismayed at the slenderness of our resources, or at the obstacles that rise like mountains in our way. The work is God's. All the ages groan and travail, as it were, in pain together, till it be accomplished. We are only standing in our lot, and doing the little that is assigned to us in our subordination to the grand design of the eternal providence. And if we would refresh and strengthen our faith in God as the author and finisher of this work, we have only to look back a little and remember what God hath wrought; we have only to look abroad upon the field as it is, and consider the present operation of his hands.

Think what was the position of the church, and

of the world, one hundred years ago. The church had passed through more than seventeen centuries of peril since the ascension of the Savior. Ages of persecution had passed over her, long ages of darkness, ages of bondage and consequent corruption; while he, with whom one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day, had been slowly unfolding his designs and preparing the way for a new dispensation of his Spirit, a new era of light and of liberty. The dawn of that new era was just beginning to redden on the sky. A wide religious awakening, here and in Great Britain, was beginning to break up the cold rigidity of a prevalent formalism; to counteract the growing tendency to materialism and infidelity that had risen out of corruption of morals, and had become established in the accepted philosophy of the age; and to assert and exhibit the vital and irrepressible freedom of spiritual Christianity. The germ, as it were, the promise, the possibility of all modern missionary enterprises, was in the evangelism of Edwards and of Bellamy; in the praying, groaning, yet exulting self-sacrifice of Brainerd; in the tongue of cloven fire that sat on Whitefield; in the apostolic fervor and daring of the Wesleys. Looking out from that point in the past, survey the world as it then was, and estimate what resources and capabilities were in the church as it then was for the conversion of the world. Everywhere in Christendom, with no considerable exception, the word of God was in some sense bound. Everywhere, not excepting the

Puritan colonies of New England, the state undertook to regulate and control, at least to some extent, the institutions of religion and the preaching of the word of God. And what were the great political sovereignties that then held dominion over the world? One hundred years ago, the empire which made its boast that on its dominions the sun never set, was the empire of Spain—superstitious, cruel, papal Spain, drunk with the blood of saints. One hundred years ago, all this western hemisphere, with the exception of the few and feeble English colonies scattered along the Atlantic coast from Maine to Georgia, was under the sovereignty of the great papal powers of Europe. One hundred years ago, how insignificant in the eye of statesmanship, how completely without influence or weight in the affairs of nations, how little regarded in the calculations of commerce, how unknown to history, how unnoticed on the map of the world, were those few English settlements, now grown into a union of free commonwealths, which, while it awes all thrones with its more than imperial power, and agitates the nations with the omens of its destiny, is working out before the whole human race a new illustration of what the gospel is in its relations to the renovation of the world. One hundred years ago, the Mohammedan power in Turkey had hardly begun to wane: the Mohammedan empire in India had not fallen: the great pagan empires beyond the Ganges, Burmah, and Siam, and China, were as inaccessible to evangelical effort as Japan is now.

Picture to yourself the world as it was no longer ago than when David Brainerd was girding himself to his work, and then look at it as we now portray it on our maps for the monthly concert of prayer, dotted on every continent and ocean and in every darkest and most barbarous land, with the luminous points of evangelical influence. Who planned, who brought to pass this great change? What hath God wrought?

What is God working now? It is not for us to cast down the thrones of oppression that stand in our way. It is not for us to unchain the enslaved and struggling races of mankind so that they may receive the gospel. It is not for us to open highways of commerce and of travel across the ocean and into the wildernesses. God is doing all that in the development of his providence. And more than all that, he pours out his Spirit to renew the face of the earth, to kindle life when all was death; and the seed which we sow so sparingly and with so little faith, springs up and waves like Lebanon. O what is God working at this moment for that great cause which gathers us in this assembly! In how many a darkened mind is the new consciousness of relations to the invisible and eternal world, beginning at this moment to kindle into light under the influence of his Spirit. In how many a barbarous language, are the redeemed and renewed from among the heathen singing at this moment with melody in their hearts unto God! The universal providence of that almighty love to which we min-

ister, prepares our way and leads us forth. The Spirit that moved on the primeval chaos, bringing forth out of that confusion, order, beauty, life and blessedness, is also the Author of that new creation toward which all things in this disordered world are tending, and in which we have our humble work to do. He who sent his Son that the world might be redeemed, will not fail to send his Spirit also, that the world may be renewed. This confidence sustains us. Without it we could have no courage for so arduous and vast an enterprise.

Let me say, in conclusion, that the subject which has been so inadequately represented in this discourse, illustrates the mutual relation between the foreign missionary work and the spiritual health of the churches. The work, as a work of faith, grounding itself from first to last on the reality of things not seen, deriving its encouragements and all its vital motives from the revealed word of God, calls faith into exercise, and invigorates by activity the principle of faith. And faith, living and active, inspiring high sympathies, prompting to apostolic enterprises, transfusing Christian truth into the affections, and translating it into action, while it feeds on the truth as it is in Jesus, and can have no other aliment, is also conservative of truth, and is its best and surest guardian. Let us press onward then in the work of subduing the world to Christ. Whatever hindrances, at home or abroad, may obstruct its progress; whatever temporary disasters may come upon it; however the blessing of

success, upon one field of labor and another, may seem to linger on its way from heaven, let us work on as workers with God; for we cannot abandon this enterprise, or relax our efforts in it, without renouncing the faith in which we have begun, and losing our hold on things invisible and eternal. We cannot grow slothful or faint in such a work as this, without sinking into a spiritual apathy that shall spread itself through the churches, from land to land, till all the power and life of godliness shall be extinguished, and nothing shall remain of truth or of devotion but cold and stony forms.

So, on the other hand, if the life and power of godliness are permitted to decline in our churches; if thus the truth, the pure gospel of Christ, is obscured by dead traditions, and superseded by barren speculations; if our churches become worldly and corrupt, losing at once the doctrine and spirit of Christ, all our enterprises for the conversion of the world will fail. The work is all, from first to last, a work of faith; and where faith, as a principle, a spiritual affection, a living force in the hearts of the redeemed, grows faint and cold, there all the nerves of feeling and of action in this work are first relaxed, then paralyzed. Oh for the presence of the Holy Spirit in all our hearts, in all our churches! Oh for the unfailing presence of that promised Comforter, teaching us all things, bringing all things to our remembrance—all Christ's glories, all his testimonies, all his promises, taking of the things of Christ and showing them to us! Oh for that

inward and immediate intercourse with God, which brings the soul into harmony with truth, and which makes the truth luminous. Oh for those illuminations beaming on the soul whose life is hid with Christ in God; those earnest apprehensions of divine and eternal things; that intense appreciation of the gospel in the simplicity and grandeur of its doctrines, before which the formalism of dead traditions and the formalism of irreverent speculation are, both alike, rebuked and subdued! Then should we arise to this great work with a more self-renouncing zeal, and with a more steadfast and inspiring confidence. Then would the word of God run and be glorified. Then should we see "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." Then would there be heard, ere long, over all the renewed and blooming earth, a voice from heaven, saying, "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God."

b.

Christianity designed for the World, and the World designed for Christianity.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT CINCINNATI, OHIO, OCTOBER 4, 1853,

BEFORE THE

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

AT THEIR

FORTY-FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING.

BY WILLIAM ADAMS, D. D.
OF NEW YORK CITY.

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SERMON.

MATTHEW XIII. 38.

THE FIELD IS THE WORLD.

When Oliver Goldsmith wrote his "Citizen of the World," there is no evidence that he had any comprehension of the religious idea involved in the title chosen for that captivating production. Every Christian is a true cosmopolite. The world is one; and for this large and scattered family God has revealed but one religion. When we assert the imperative claims of the Christian religion to universal faith and obedience, many are disposed to evade the obligation by affirming that Christianity is only one of the many religions of the world; that its historical origin is comparatively recent; its geographical jurisdiction is and always has been very limited; its practical influence, if not a failure, is certainly by no means commensurate with its vast pretensions; and, last of all, that, as politics, the arts and sciences have each their appropriate and distinctive domain, so the gospel of Christ is but one of the many subordinate agencies of the world; a kind of side play, whose proper province

is within a certain professional class, and whose field of display is the Sabbath, the church, the house of affliction, and the courts of death; and because of this meagre induction, thousands absolve themselves from all obligation, either to receive or propagate the religion of the Son of God.

Christianity is not a mere afterthought, but an original project; not an episode, but the main plot; it does not belong prescriptively to the small strips of land here and there where its light now shines; its field is the world, and its ultimate jurisdiction will be universal. As our belief on this subject is not a matter of theoretic calculation, or philosophic deduction, but of religious faith, we may expect to find in Christianity itself, its doctrines and its history, the promise and the proof of its universal prevalence. But what is Christianity? Where is Christianity? Not an aroma floating in the air. Not a soft and poetic sentiment playing through the imagination of the philanthropic. It is a historical existence, and is to be examined and judged in its own inspired and infallible records.

Assembled to-day on the beautiful banks of the Ohio, a thousand miles from the place where, forty years ago, this missionary association was organized, and thousands more from the spot where, eighteen hundred years ago, the Author of our religion gave the commission to evangelize the world; cheered by the memory of past successes, and studious still of the methods by which we may bear the gospel of our Lord from river to river and from sea to sea, let us, first of all, go entirely back to the inspired

chronicles of our faith, and gather up some of the facts therein contained, bearing on that one sentiment to which we are publicly pledged,—"Christianity designed for the world, and the world designed for Christianity."

The first fact to be mentioned is, that Christianity *asserts* its *own universality;* and this not incidentally, but as inherent in its first and vital principles. There is no authority and there can be no comfort in the Christian Revelation to me, as an individual, if that authority and that comfort extend not equally to all mankind. The gospel addresses us simply as men. It recognizes us only as citizens of the world. It knows no national distinction and no territorial boundaries. Its two central ideas are SIN and SALVATION; man has fallen, and for man has Christ died. The nations are many; but the world is one. Begin your genealogical pedigree where you will, in whatever portion of the earth's surface, among whatever kindred or tribe, all will converge at last towards the first links of the chain which describe the beginning of our race: "who was the son of Adam—who was the Son of God." It is the race of man, the whole race, that have felt the direful visitations of sin; and the offers of pardon and restoration are commensurate with the evils they would remedy. "*To the whole world*," is the superscription upon the royal proclamation of amnesty and glad tidings. Question this universality in the gospel's own structure and adaptation, and you quench the hopes which brighten your own path; since you are but one of a common race.

The Christian religion, moreover, is the *only* religion which asserts its own universality. The accomplished Reinhard has achieved a goodly service in the analysis which he has given of all the philosophies and religions of the world, in proof of the fact, that, prior to the commission given to the Eleven on the Mount of Ascension, the idea is not to be found of a religious system which claimed to be universal in its adaptation. When the Prophet of Mecca, ignorant of the fact authenticated by modern science, that there are parts of the habitable globe where the sun rises and sets but once for months in succession, incorporated in the Koran the practical precept, that the religious fasts to be observed by men should begin at the very instant the limb of the sun appeared above the horizon, and should be continued strictly until the same disappeared in the western sky, he not only proved the provincialism but the falsity of his religion. Nor was he the only instance in which, through the unconscious adhesions of things absurd and impossible, the ancient fable has found a sober verification; the eagle, purloining meat from the altar of the gods, and perceiving not the coal of fire adhering thereto by which its own nest was to be consumed.

No sooner do we set forth this claim of Christianity to an universal range and authority, than we are met by an objection greatly urged by modern infidelity, — an objection which scoffs at all our religious propagandism, for it affirms the historical fact, that Christianity is only a recent introduction;

that Jesus of Nazareth was not born until two-thirds of the world's age was passed, and that, as good men existed before his advent, under other forms of worship, it is absurd to claim that his religion is the only true and sufficient one for all men and for all times. An objection we admit well put, if we were allowed to forswear the fact recorded by inspiration, that Christianity did not begin in Bethlehem of Judea. It began in Eden; and among the many proofs that it is the one and only true religion which God has revealed is this, that it is the very oldest of all. Long before the Persian adored the sun, or the Chaldean bowed before the hosts of heaven, or the Egyptian framed his colossal altars and idolatries, did Christianity begin its veritable life and progress. Wonder not that the antagonists of the Christian system expend so much time and talent in proving what they affirm, the falsity and absurdity of the Jewish religion. Think not that it is a mere matter of biblical criticism, or philological lore, when so much pains are taken to eject the Epistle to the Hebrews from the inspired canon. Most warily has infidelity chosen its points for attack; and we frankly confess, that were we not fully fortified in the belief of the connection of the Jewish and Christian dispensations as together forming one substantial identity, the one religion revealed to man from heaven, there is no form in which our minds would be so open to skeptical intrusions concerning the necessity of embracing ourselves, and communicating to others, the Christian system as the only hope

of man, as that which Neology has assumed in its assaults upon the Jewish system. Therefore it is that inspiration has, to such a degree, exhausted its own skill and explicitness, in explaining to us the appurtenances and forms of the Patriarchal and Levitical worships. Those were not of human origin, like the tripod of the Grecian flamen, the Eleusinian mysteries, or the forms of Druidical worship. They were copied from the pattern shown to Moses in the Mount. Though now obsolete, yet they are not to be classed with the mummeries of false religions. It was Christianity which smoked in the first sacrificial victim that was offered outside the gates of forfeited Paradise. It was Christianity that was enshrined in that sacred ark which was borne across the brilliant sands of Syria, and between the crystal walls of the parted Jordan. It was Christianity that entered the Holy of Holies, in tabernacle and temple, with graven breast-plate and atoning blood. But it was Christianity not yet in its ripeness and readiness; only in its promise and preparation. Christianity was there, just as whole harvests of grain are now included in the husks of that handful of corn which is yet to germinate; just as immense forests were once enclosed within the shell and burr of the seed-nut from whence sprang growth and reproduction.

It is not incumbent on any human wisdom to explain why God appointed such length and slowness to the preparatory stages of revealed redemption. Why should summer insects measure the stupendous revolutions of the stars by the wheelings

of their own tiny flights? We, indeed, might refute objections alleged against this progressive development of Christianity, by appealing to all the analogies of nature, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Corn is not fit to be used for planting and reproduction while yet in the blade. And it is quite pertinent to our present argument concerning the universality of the Christian system, to remind ourselves that, though the revelation of Christianity began in the early dawn of history, yet its world-wide diffusion was not authorized until the fullness of time had come.

It is not an admission extorted from us reluctantly, but a patent fact to which, as studious of the ways of God, we call a special attention, that the typical institutions of Christianity were strictly local and stationary. It was not owing to human defects and unfaithfulness, that nothing was done for ages by way of propagating the true faith. This was in accordance with divine direction and interdict. The people chosen to be the depositaries of the one revelation from God, were isolated from the rest of the world by a thousand laws and limitations. Matrimonial alliances, out of their own nation, were strictly prohibited. To convert remote nations to their religion was not their vocation. The admission of proselytes from abroad, though permitted in certain cases, was guarded, according to the structure of their religious system, with the greatest caution. Everything tended to seclusion and concentration, rather than diffusion and extension.

It is of the utmost importance to be understood, that the Jewish system, notwithstanding its relations to the redemption of Christ, was as purely local as our court of common pleas. It was not designed for aggression at all. It had no agencies for propagandism. It was in no sense organized for extension into foreign parts. The high priest was a fixture. No itinerant service had he to perform in Moab or Idumea. No other man on earth was permitted to do what he was ordained of God to perform, and his service was to be rendered only within the solemn precincts of the temple. The sacred scrolls were in the custody of a particular order of men; and the rites of the true religion could only be performed by a certain line of consecrated succession. Everything was arranged to preserve the one revealed faith unmixed and uncontaminated from the profane touch of the heathen.

Observe, at the same time, how the providential condition of the world was suited to this formative and infant state of revealed Christianity. The state of the earth was unfavorable to intercommunication. There were few facilities for travel and commerce. Early in the world's history, men had sought on the plains of Shinar to centralize wealth, population and empire. By a special act, God defeated their purpose, and separated them into distinct tribes and nations, by diversities of language. Everything tended to segregation. A range of mountains, a river, a sea, were sufficient barriers to national intercourse. What an immense trial of faith was it for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to

pass and repass between the Euphrates, the Jordan and the Nile, where now tourists from this western world find their holiday recreation. Both sacred and profane history abound with proofs of the separateness and solitariness of the nations. Homer is supposed to have lived at the very time that the splendors of the Jewish economy culminated at the court and the temple of Solomon. But the author of the Odyssey was entirely ignorant of countries within a few hours' sail of Greece. The Argonautic expedition is described as sailing up through the Hellespont and the Euxine, and returning by the Pillars of Hercules; as if the sea of Azof were connected with the Atlantic Ocean. The author of the Æneid, describing his hero landing on the shores of Carthage by the inevitable event of shipwreck, relates the consternation which he felt in expectation of losing his life because a stranger and a foreigner.

While typical Christianity, for the sake of its own preservation and purity, was local and stationary, the world itself was retained in a condition suited to the purpose. Time advances, and striking changes occur simultaneously in both. The prophecies of the Hebrew faith are kindling into the morning; all the rays of truth and hope are converging towards the advent of the Son of God; and Christianity is approaching the days of her enlargement and completion. The old walls of partition are broken down. The gorgeous pile of symbolic architecture which crowned the top of Moriah, like an immense mould, was to be broken

to pieces; and the spiritual fabric that had been cast therein was to be brought forth to the light. The Kings of the East, the appointed agencies of God, swept down from the Caucasus to the Mediterranean, like birds of prey, and spoiled the sanctities of the Holy City. God's chosen nation, so long preserved in their integrity and separation, are dispersed like the chaff by the whirlwind, and throne and temple vanish from the earth. The nations of the earth become infused and intermixed, passing and repassing in the jostlings and attritions of war, conquering and being conquered,—all in the order of inspired prediction,—until Christianity was ready for the world, when lo! the world is made ready for Christianity!

When the embryo religion was yet in its needful seclusion and quiet, there had been secretly and slowly coming into life a new and masculine power, which was destined to change the face of the world. It began before Isaiah had fallen a victim to the rage of Manasseh; before Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed, and Daniel, interpreting the finger of God, had announced the rise of successive dynasties. It had more than a hundred thousand inhabitants when Xerxes marshaled his hosts on the banks of the Hellespont. Its population had reached a quarter of a million, before Alexander the Great had subjugated the East by his tremendous exploits at Arbela and the Granicus. Rolling through its successive eras, ever tending to aggrandizement, like a swelling river, it at length absorbs in its own vast supremacy all the kingdoms

of the world. Sicily, Carthage, Epirus, Macedonia, Pergamos, Bithynia, Galatia, Pontus, Syria, Cappadocia, Egypt, Judea, Gaul and Britain, all became provinces and appendages of the Roman Empire. Never before was any dominion so distinguished by universality. Her consuls and her eagles, at the same time, were on the shores of Wales and the banks of the Tigris; on the summits of the Carpathian mountains, and along the Arabian and Lybian deserts.

In this new phase and condition of the world, in one of the provinces of this universal empire, the Son of God was born, the Lamb of God was slain, and the gospel was ready for the world. For the first time, since the world was made, was the commission given to evangelize all nations. An end had come to everything typical and preparatory; to everything local and exclusive. The Jew, as such, was to be known no more. To MAN is the gospel given. All mankind were now to share in privileges which hitherto had been reserved and restricted to a peculiar people. The early promise made to Abraham, in the dim dawn of the world, "All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him," found its incipient fulfillment, when, standing on the slope of Olivet, on the morning of his ascension, the Son of God, radiant with the joys of his finished redemption, said to his disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Hard was it for the best and bravest of their number to comprehend this universal quality of the faith they preached. Supernatural methods were put in requi-

sition to convince Peter himself, that the old distinction between clean and unclean was abrogated forever; and when, obedient to the mission, he visited the house of Cornelius, Jewish prejudices were so strong that he was arraigned before a council at Jerusalem for preaching the gospel to a Gentile. One by one, the scales fell; by little and little, the truth prevailed, till at last the glorious conviction was reached, that to be a Christian was more than to be a Jew; and that in the length and breadth, height and depth of one universal faith, all the preceding distinctions of men were to be swallowed up forever. The tiny insects of the Pacific seas, building up the reefs which breast and break the surges of the ocean, the islands and continents on which vegetation rises and cities swarm with life, can have no anticipation of the magnificent results of their subaqueous architecture. No more had the successive emperors of Rome, in the play and passion of personal ambition, in the blind impulses of self-aggrandizement, any knowledge or imagination of the uses of their success; but these arise out of the ocean depths of God's wisdom. Their military roads and bridges were built, their consulates and prefectures were established, and along these 'highways of the Lord' came bounding the footsteps of a free and beneficent Christianity.

With these combinations of the gospel's own nature, history and providential adaptations full in our minds, let us now inquire, for our own practical help and guidance, what were the agencies by which the religion of Christ received its first rapid

and general promulgation. These were of three kinds: the *miraculous*, the *organized*, and the *spontaneous*.

The *miraculous* was of temporary necessity, and having subserved this, was suspended. Using the word in its strict rhetorical sense, we say that the *presumption* at first was against the religion of the cross; that is to say, the '*onus probandi*' was with those who first preached it in opposition to long established institutions.* That obligation was not evaded, but met; the author of our religion furnishing his disciples with the power of establishing their proofs through miraculous attestations. But now, after the long and eventful history of the Christian religion, the "burden of proof" is reversed; and if miracles are to be looked for at all, they must be demanded of those who would disprove this ancient, venerable and unshaken faith of the world. If it be retorted that, in other lands than our own, in the presence of the aged superstitions of heathenism, the "burden of proof" rests upon the Christian missionaries who invade them, we admit the fact, rejoicing that such men are deputed for the service as are fully competent and equipped to meet the demands with proofs and arguments, even though the original help of mira-

* According to the most correct use of the term, a "Presumption" in favor of any supposition, means, not (as has been sometimes erroneously imagined) a preponderance of antecedent probability in its favor, but such a *preoccupation* of the ground as implies that it must stand good till some sufficient reason is adduced against it; in short, that the *Burden of proof* lies on the side of him who would dispute it. There is a Presumption in favor of every *existing* institution.—*Whately's Rhetoric*, P. I. ch. iii. § 2.

cles is now entirely withdrawn. Christianity asks and expects no more miraculous assistance in her aggressions; and we dismiss this original agency from our inventory of available forces with the single remark, that the miracles which were wrought by or in connection with the first teachers of Christianity, were all, without an exception, designed to aid and illustrate its universal jurisdiction. The miracle of tongues, the first and most notable of all, is itself a proof that the Christian faith was to be no longer restricted to one time or language,—a miracle needful once only, when men untaught and illiterate were to open communication with the assembled representatives of all nations and languages; but altogether superfluous to-day, when, by the processes of education and the intermingling of men, the acquisition of various languages is an easy and ordinary occurrence.

By the *organized* evangelism of primitive believers, we mean all such human agencies as imply method, plan, system and sagacious adaptation, whether on the part of churches or individuals. Directed to tarry first at Jerusalem, the disciples forgot their world-wide commission till persecution, with its friendly violence, scattered them like a frightened flock. Comprehending, at length, the nature of their trust, we detect wisdom and forethought in the ordination of particular men to particular services. Peter, James and John, "who seemed to be pillars," went unto the circumcision; while Paul and Barnabas were set apart to the ministry of the heathen. What wonders of wis-

dom are suggested by the bare mention of his name who is known as "the great Apostle to the Gentiles." Lord Lyttelton, fully persuaded that the Bible was an imposture and determined to expose it, selected the conversion of Paul as the subject of hostile criticism, and was himself converted to the truth of Christianity by the very topic chosen for its overthrow. Passing by the phenomena of the Apostle's conversion, it seems to us that an irrefutable argument for the universality of the Christian religion is suggested by the qualities which met in this remarkable man and minister. The service to be accomplished was the widest possible dissemination of the new faith among all nations; the infusion of Christianity into the mind of the world. But what was the mind of the world at that time? Not simple, but complicated. Three forms of civilization there were, distinct yet related, Jewish, Grecian, and Roman. Intermingled were the representatives of each, from farthest East to utmost West. The Jew was ubiquitous, from the Indus to the Tiber, with all the memories of his religion and the pride of his ancestry. The Greek had built his commercial cities and reared his elegant academies in Egypt and Syria. The translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek by the Seventy at Alexandria; Philo, the Jewish philosopher, in the same city, and Josephus, the Jewish courtier at Jerusalem, both ambitiously addicted to Grecian literature, are evidences to what extent the Greek language and philosophy had become diffused; while, as we have seen, over

the whole, East, West, North and South, the towering eagle of Imperial Rome was in the ascendancy. How many qualities must be combined in the man who, bearing the august title of "Apostle to the Nations," was to be sent forth to persuade such a heterogeneous civilization of the truth of the Christian religion. A Jew by birth, of the straitest sect, trained in every rite and law pertaining to the religion of his fathers, thoroughly experienced in every prejudice, objection and sympathy of the Pharisee; at the same time, born in Tarsus, a Greek city, the rival of Athens and Alexandria in the zeal of letters; from his childhood a proficient in the Greek language, familiar with the Septuagint as with the Hebrew original, a reader of the Greek drama and a great master of that "mental management" which then was to be learned only within the circle of Grecian dialectics and rhetoric, among his peers on Areopagus, in the presence of Stoic and Epicurean, comprehending perfectly the scorn which sat on the curled lip and gleamed from the half-shut eyes of his erudite auditors when he preached unto them the foolishness of the cross; superadded to all which, he was by birth a free Roman citizen, the highest protection and prerogative of his age, so that in every peril from Jew or Greek he was shielded as by Minerva's ægis, the report that he was a Roman throwing open the jail of Philippi for his egress, delivering him from the scourge and the mob on the castle stairs at Jerusalem, carrying him into the presence of governors and kings; and an appeal to Cæsar, transporting him over the Adriatic to the imperial city, where he had often longed to

go, and where, with mingled dignity, heroism and success, he preached the gospel of Christ "at Rome also;" aye, within the very precincts of the palace; Who can study this correspondency of exigencies and qualities in the person of him who leads the long column of Christian evangelists, without admitting the lesson thus taught the Christian church, for all time, concerning the wisdom of preparation, method, adaptation and combination in all her missionary aggression?

Passing from those ordained and official agencies which, as we believe, are perpetual in the church for her edification and enlargement, there remains another, among the earliest instruments of Christian evangelism, which we have called the *spontaneous*, and, as we might have added, the secular and laical; which, however overlooked and suspected now, if we have rightly interpreted the facts of the New Testament, was at the beginning among the most honored and successful of all human instrumentalities, and which is to be revived again, in more than pristine force, as a grand reliance of our modern missions.

It was by no accident that so large a concourse of unofficial persons, from all parts of the world, were assembled at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. "Then they that were scattered abroad," so reads the Sacred Record, "went everywhere preaching the word."* Stumble not at the word

* To render it certain that the allusion here is not to the ordained officials of the church, it is added in the same chapter, (Acts viii.) "they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, *except the Apostles.*"

"preaching," because of the official associations which are connected with it by modern usage. It signifies simply, in its original sense, the act of evangelizing or reporting abroad the good news of salvation. The news of a great victory outstrips the official heralds who are sent to announce it. The idea on which we would insist is already before you. Stately apostleships, ordained dignitaries were not the only channels of saving grace. The ceremonial holiness and exclusiveness which, as we have seen, belonged to the official persons, representing the preparatory dispensations of Christianity, were lost forever when Christianity had reached its ripeness and universality. Profanation was it for any mortal, save the anointed son of Levi, to touch the vessels of the local worship; but now that the fountains of life are unsealed, every one who receives of their fullness heralds it abroad in every place. A matter of personal experience, they could not leave it behind them; but bore it with them as an inseparable part of their own life.

The Christian faith was thus propagated in the easiest and most natural of all methods. It was the outbreaking of spontaneous and irrepressible force. It revealed and declared itself, as light shines, without compulsion. Such is our conception of the spontaneity with which the honest self-conviction of the earliest converts to Christ made expression of itself, that it strikes us as something preposterous, to imagine the first company of disciples engaged in urging one another to a more earnest propagation of the faith by that style of arguments, drawn from philanthropy, obligation,

expediency, necessity and policy, which make up the persuasion of our modern missionary aggression. There is next to nothing of all this in the New Testament. Possessing, or rather possessed by this one fact of the gospel, that Jesus Christ had died for the world's redemption, they spread the glorious tidings wherever they went.

One of the most pregnant passages in all the New Testament, bearing on Christian missions, is that last chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, which, consisting chiefly of personal salutations to private persons, might strike a superficial eye, as the least promising and instructive, containing nothing but a bare and arid catalogue of names.

There was at this time, Anno Domini 60, a Christian church, that is, a body of Christian believers in the imperial city. It had been in existence for a considerable time. It had grown to such a magnitude as to justify the Apostle in addressing to it the most elaborate of all his Epistles. By whom was that church established? By some, it has been regarded as of prime importance to hold that the Apostle Peter was the founder of that metropolitan church. By itself, the assertion is of very little consequence; correct or incorrect, not worth a tithe of the words which have been expended upon the controversy. But the assertion does not stand by itself. It is the foundation-stone of a vast system of hierarchical pretension. Archbishop Whately has a capital essay on *omissions*. We infer as much, in certain cases, from what is *not* said, as, in others, from what *is* said. The classical reader will remember that it was the mere

absence of Cato's statue in the Roman procession, which was so suspicious and suggestive. Here have we, from the pen of "our beloved brother Paul," kindly mention of all the Christians he had ever known, resident in the imperial capital, without a single allusion to him who is now claimed by the Roman primacy to have been the founder, and, at that very time, the resident Bishop of the church at Rome. By whom was it founded? The evidence is before us. Ordinary men and women, engaged in the common occupations of life, merchants, craftsmen, freedmen, who, traveling from one country to another in their professional pursuits, carried in their own bosoms the vital forces of the Christian faith. The first greeting in these apostolical reminiscences is to Aquila, and his wife Priscilla, of whom we have heard before. Five years previously, when the decree of Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome, these unpretending artisans — for they were tent-makers — arrived in Corinth, and Paul wrought with them. Eighteen months afterwards, they accompanied the Apostle to Ephesus, where they stood by him in his perils, and where a church was gathered in their house. Laical and humble in their occupations, their attainments in piety were of no ordinary kind; for when Apollos commenced his brilliant career as an eloquent preacher at Corinth, they received him to their own lodgings and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. The death of Claudius removing the interdict by which they were exiled, this pious couple return to Rome, kindle the fires on their own altar, and forthwith Paul sends his

greetings to the "church which is in their house." The evangelic prediction of Zechariah is already accomplished.* Every domestic utensil in the houses of men is sanctified more truly than the golden bowl on the ancient altar. Ceremonially, unholy was woman esteemed in relation to the mysteries of the symbolic temple; but no sooner are the blessings of Christianity ready for universal diffusion, than we find the Apostle here making honorable mention of the Marys and Priscillas, of Persis, Tryphena and Tryphosa, godly women, who "labored with him" in the gospel, consecrating the graces and amenities of their sex to the one end of diffusing the savor of Christ's name in every place. Nor was this all. As a beautiful illustration of the ease and readiness with which Christianity adjusts itself to extrinsic necessities, where the vital power is within, instead of being compressed and laced within prescribed and changeless forms, the first personage introduced, in this chapter, is a woman who had an *official* connection with the church at Cenchrea—a deaconess by appointment —because the conventional usages of the times, secluding the female sex by themselves, left them accessible, even when most they needed instruction and hope, only to one of themselves; nor should the church ever forget or forego the right she possesses, of creating or pretermitting many forms of agency

* In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, Holiness unto the Lord; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts. (Zech. xiv. 20, 21.) Now that the waters of life are for *diffusion*, a cup of horn, or iron, or potter's clay is canonical in the best of all senses, for it is useful.

which necessity and expediency may suggest, as a help to her saving work. We glory in the belief, that in all matters touching the real efficiency of the Christian church, she has received of her Lord the utmost liberty which her largest benevolence could desire. Water, air, light, are not more free in flowing into every opening and filling every cavity, than was the spirit of the primitive church in adapting its action to every exigency. We must go back to the records of Christianity themselves, if we would learn more of what the church is yet to learn much—the power and wisdom of lay-agency. Practical evangelism is not to be confined to Pauls and Peters, Brainerds and Martyns; and in the proper place, it may be well to institute the inquiry, whether among the means and methods of evangelizing the heathen it should not be projected by laymen, of all arts and professions, we do not say to be sent, but to send themselves, in the arrangements of their own trade, toil and traffic, all over the earth, for the express purpose of being succorers of the gospel, rearing churches—as did those men and women whose names inspiration has immortalized in this Roman epistle, above any emblazoned on classic pillar or tablet—in their own homes, and pouring light and love through all the channels of secular intercourse, upon the souls of the benighted.

And now, having considered the relations of Christianity and the world, at the beginning, together with some of the means by which the one was diffused throughout the other, we transport ourselves across intervening centuries and continents, to the

spot where we now stand, in the heart of the New World; and from this position, late in time, and remote in space from the point where Christianity began its flight, we are to ask whether the relations of these two objects, Christianity and the World, are such as will justify the sentiment to which we are pledged.

And here, the first fact which stretches itself entirely across our vision, is the astounding verity that eighteen centuries have entirely passed away since the ascension of our Lord, and yet so limited is the territorial domain of Christianity, that not one whole nation under heaven can be found entirely and thoroughly pervaded by its presence and power. Scoffing skepticism would bid us answer, what else than a chimera it can be, for us to set forth the notion that the world and Christianity were made one for another, when, after so long an experiment, Christianity has not even retained its own, but has been diluted by error, subject to monstrous abuses and perversions, and has lent itself to the most long-lived and tyrannical of all superstitions, cursing the nations it should have blessed, and diverted out of its course by a thousand obstacles.

We volunteer no explanation of the mysteries of Providence, in the history of the Christian religion. The life of God is eternal; and his plans extend through thousands of years. Speak of delays and disappointments, of long ages of darkness and of barbarism! Tell us of the centuries in which the Christian faith was wrapped up in the mummy cerements of formalism and superstition! The

very mistakes of men, in reference to religion, are instructive; and the experiments of human folly, though they consume ages, are a real economy of time; for men, when they are bent on making trial of their own expedients, in place of the blessed gospel, emerge on the hither side of the experiment with more of wisdom, more of self-conviction, because the lesson has been burned into them by centuries of suffering and shame. Multiply your objections to any degree, as drawn from the delays and corruptions of the Christian faith, the one fact remains, and this is all which we are concerned now to state, that Christianity has been a gainer at every stage and epoch of its eventful life. It has not merely survived opposition, but actually drawn lustre from reproach, and developed strength in every conflict, so that its practical power is greater now than ever it was before. Its power is greater to-day than when it was first preached at Jerusalem. It is greater now than when the labarum of Constantine blazoned the cross in courts and camps. It is greater now than when Britain was converted to the Christian faith; greater by far than at the era of the Reformation. It possesses a wider territorial jurisdiction than when the Puritans landed in the new world. Who can doubt that it has a stronger hold on the intelligent convictions of the world, than it had before Lord Herbert wrote his work, "De Veritate," Toland his "Christianity without Mystery," Lord Shaftesbury his "Characteristics," Collins his essay on "Free Thinking," Bolingbroke his "Essays and Fragments," Tindal

his "Christianity as old as the Creation," Hume his "Dialogues on Nature and Religion," or Paine his "Age of Reason."

If we have been instructed in observing the adaptations of Christianity and the world, one to another, at the beginning of the Christian era, who can doubt that both have proceeded from the same authorship, and have obeyed the same direction, in subsequent stages and developments?

We have spoken of *the world* as being ready for Christianity, when Christianity was ready for it. We mean the world *as it then was.* We have reason to believe that the feet of the Apostles and their contemporaries traversed the then known world, from Arabia to Britain. But how large a portion of the world we inhabit, was entirely concealed from their knowledge and approach. The roads surveyed by the last imperial decree before the advent of Christ, were less than four thousand miles in extent. The most westerly land known to the "mistress of the world" was one of the Canary Islands; the most northerly, called Ultima Thule, one of the Shetlands. Africa was supposed to be joined to Asia on the south, and was not circumnavigated till the fifteenth century after Christ. In the geography which was compiled by Ptolemy in the second century, we have embodied all the knowledge which then existed of the earth. From this we learn that the portion of land belonging to the globe, of which anything was known to Ptolemy and his contemporaries, was scarcely one-third of that which is known to us; while of the

one hundred and fifty-five millions of square miles of water covering the rest of the globe, they knew absolutely nothing. How scanty the knowledge possessed by them of the globe, appears from the belief then prevalent, that none but the temperate zone was habitable; both the torrid and the frigid zones being supposed to be destructive of animal life.

Plainly it was the intention of Providence, that Christianity should pass through various trials before, in its highest and latest sense, it should be fitted for the literal occupancy of the whole world. The mystery of the sea hid one entire hemisphere from human sight. These broad rivers were running their long way silently and wondrously to the sea. These forests grew and decayed, and grew again in their endless reproduction. These wide and western prairies lay beneath the eye of God, in patient and beautiful trust in the future uses of the Almighty. No Tyrian ship, no Egyptian barge, no Grecian argosy, no Roman galley, no Saracen flotilla was suffered to pass the "pillars of Hercules," and break the silence and mystery of the Western ocean, and plant on these shores the irradicable seeds of their varied and mighty superstitions. The time was not yet for the widest possible dissemination of the Christian faith.

Observe the changes to which Christianity itself was subject; trials and changes for which *time* was needful, and each and all of which were developing more and more of the universal qualities of the true faith.

The first great trial to which it was subject, was in the presence of Jewish intolerance and heathen hate. The one question was, whether it should be suffered to live. World-wide the persecution rages against the church. The Neros, the Caligulas, the Domitians of the earth resolved to drown the spreading "superstition" in blood. The more violently the storm rages, the deeper are the roots which the Christian faith strikes into the ground, and the broader the growth which it spreads into the air.

Next, Christianity was corrupted and perverted. The very power which before had assaulted the religion of Christ, now treacherously assumes the name, the crown, the robe and the sceptre of Christ, and the world became enslaved to an aged and colossal tyranny. The next advance of Christianity was to divest herself of all these falsehoods and enslavements, and come forth free and reformed.

The Protestant Reformation was a great event, marvelous in its nature and effects. But it was not an event complete and ultimate. It was only one of the demiurgic days of the world's creation. It was not the Sabbath of the world's finishing and repose. It was a movement in the right direction; but it implied the necessity and the promise of greater changes to come.

Protestantism itself crystalized into icy forms, and Christianity was lulled to sleep in the arms of political establishments. It had its rituals, its injunctions, its forced conformities; at length its lifeless ceremonies. It was needful that reformed,

Protestant Christianity, should have a second resurrection. At last it came. When truth had taken root, when it had become incorporated into church creeds, and had become an admitted element of national faith, then came the Puritans and the Non-conformists, an order of men whose sole desire was for spiritual life; and now it was that Christianity, invested with all the accumulated experience of ages, crosses the ocean, and finds, in a new world, the theatre for a new and higher development.

Observe, this country was not settled, not at all in the proper sense of the term, until after the Protestant Reformation. The men who gave a soul to our history were Protestants in a double sense; reformers of the reformation. Yet were they called of God to a service which, while it was needful and manly, was not the most favorable to spiritual extension. Times of resistance to ecclesiastical despotism are not the most auspicious for true evangelism. Those who are summoned to do vigorous battle against positive wrongs, are not always the best prepared or the most successful in making glad the wilderness with the verdure and bloom of the gospel. This accounts for the fact that, at the Reformation, Christianity, though liberated by the struggles of Truth, was not largely extended by the power and impulses of Love.

A century was allowed the new church to strike its roots deep into our soil; a century of unmolested freedom, with just trial enough to make root and fibre tough and strong. The ocean rolled between it and ecclesiastical despotism. Here was Protest-

antism, and Protestantism free, unshackled, with none to dictate or circumscribe, and a new and boundless continent for its expansion. She planted her churches, established her schools and colleges, educated her children, reared her ministers, and with occasional follies and mistakes, such as will mar all things human, the thing attained was a community of free and thoughtful men, born and bred in the faith of God's own word.

When all this was accomplished, there occurred, throughout the Christian world, but chiefly on our own continent, an event, now little more than a century ago, which, if we rightly understand it, must be regarded as the most significant and important, and, in its relations to the future, suggestive and prophetic, of all which has taken place thus far in the history of the Christian church since the ascension of our Lord and the wonders of Pentecost. We refer to that great revival of religion, which, like the breath of spring, passed over the face of Christendom, the focal point of which was in the central parts of Massachusetts. Time enough has now elapsed for generalizing into one, events which, at the time, appeared distinct and unrelated. Methodism, as it arose in the English church, a thing, not a name, so ably analyzed and described by Isaac Taylor, and the revivals of religion in Scotland and New England, may be regarded as one historic development. The peculiarities were local and formal; the essential was the same in all. The substantial features of that great religious movement, were the waking up of personal consciousness,

a new sense of individual relationship to God, of intense life and earnest zeal for the conversion of souls. Men were converted to the truth of Christ in unusual numbers, with unusual rapidity and with unusual distinctness. The effect of that event has been felt in every part of the civilized world. The "missionary spirit," as the common expression is, that is, *active evangelism*, carrying and applying the gospel in every direction, at home and abroad, is the legitimate result, or rather the best description of that general movement. To mark the progress which has since been made by the Christian church, it must be observed that events, which once were extraordinary, are esteemed so no longer. The minds of men are already become familiar with occurrences and expectations which once were regarded as very uncommon. Many of the striking conversions recorded by Edwards, the pious historiographer of the earlier stages of this movement, would awaken no sense of surprise to-day. In the year 1820, Dr. Worcester, then Secretary of this Board of Foreign Missions, in an address to Christians of all denominations in this country, uses the following language: "By means of these establishments, [missionary,] and mostly since our last address to you, more than *thirty* persons, belonging to five or six different heathen nations, have, in the judgment of charity, been brought to the spiritual knowledge of the truth." The announcement is made as of a great event, and in very guarded phrase, as if it must meet with incredulity. Yet such advances have been made since then that,

without any surprise, we hear that *thousands*, in a single year, have been converted to God in the Pacific Isles. Should it be announced before this our annual session is closed, that twenty thousand among the Tamil and Armenian population of the East were truly converted to Christ, it would not appear half so wonderful as the conversion of the first ten or twenty at the beginning of that era of evangelism from which we measure our latest progress. We have been moving with a great current, of the swiftness and force of which, as of our Mississippi, we have but little conception while borne upon its mighty tide. The Christian sentiment of the country has deepened in its flow. There is more of active philanthropy now than ever before ; more of organized effort to relieve misery, reclaim vice, inform ignorance ; more, in a word, than at any previous epoch, to diffuse the gospel with its light and charities. Added to all which, those revivals of religion, which have given a peculiarity to this latest period of Christian development, have not disappeared ; fewer in number, feebler in power, more limited in extent than we could desire, yet sufficient in well-attested effects to keep it fresh in our minds to what period of time we belong, and always prophetic of the greater disclosures of the future.

Turning to the future, we expect and believe that the gospel, diffused and extended, by appropriate instrumentalities, throughout the world, will be accompanied by a power from on high, producing effects on the minds of men, compared with

which all that has preceded is but the shadow of the sun. We predict no smooth current of undisputed and uninterrupted prosperity. Fallings away, heresies, infidelities, strugglings, like the heathenish signs of the zodiac, may be in the path of our sun. Nevertheless, the pure truth of God will receive the widest circulation. Copies of the word of God will be multiplied, and the Christian ministry reinforced in adequate numbers. All the appliances of modern invention and enterprise, the new stimulus given to commerce, and all the facilities for international communication, will find their true dignity and use in diffusing the truth of God with ever-increasing rapidity and extent. In this service of disseminating truth, there will be a place for every kind of instrumentality. Lay-agency, introduced so efficiently by Wesley and Whitefield in the last awakening of the church, was only prophetic of that universal life and activity which are hereafter to characterize the membership of the Christian church. Here then is one definite expectation for the future. Here is an appropriate place for every good work. As God converts men by truth, it is an indispensable work. "The *knowledge* of the Lord is to cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea."

Nor is this a service to be finished, by itself, before we are to expect yet greater things. Simultaneously with the diffusion of truth, we may expect those applications of the Divine Spirit, which will subdue opposition, conquer unbelief, and bring mankind into a personal acceptance of the gospel

in numbers, rapidity and decision, such as never yet have been seen. The great harvest, of which all preceding gatherings are but the first fruits, is yet to come. We have had, as yet, only the type and the shadow. The substantial reality is still future. Nothing yet has occurred worthy to be regarded as a fulfillment of the great promises of Scripture relative to the universal outpouring of the Holy Spirit. What occurred at Pentecost, "signs and wonders in the heavens, sun and moon changed, the heavens and the earth shaken," was only the beginning in the verification of the tropical language of Joel, the first in that long series of events which are to mark the triumphs of the Spirit of God. We rejoice over the conversion of a few, here and there; one from a family, and two from a neighborhood; but accessions are not always to be made to the church of Christ after this manner. The church will never overtake the growth of this world's population, according to such an arithmetic. We have as yet but a glimpse,—enough to bear up and guide our faith, but a prophecy still,—of the *number* of those who will be made willing in the day of God's power. They are likened unto the drops of the morning dew. The church is yet to be the joy of the whole earth; and men will flock into it as "CLOUDS AND AS DOVES TO THEIR WINDOWS."

Nor is it of numbers only that we speak. A new epoch is coming as to the character of those converted, and the nature of a religious life. We talk of men converted now; but, oh, how little do we

know of spiritual life! We are like corpses galvanized into partial vitality. We talk about the spiritual world. But how little does the strongest faith apprehend, as yet, of the powers of the world to come! Sense still holds the ascendancy. This is not to be so always. We have reason to anticipate such a new power, applied by the Holy Ghost to the souls of men, that the life, the love, the faith, the joy, the sanctity of men renewed will be so much in advance of all we now experience, that our life, compared with theirs, will appear like a sleep. Those great words, GOD, CHRIST, MAN, SIN, SALVATION, HEAVEN, HELL, over which men now slumber, even when they admit them into their intellectual convictions, will be as if illuminated with flame. We do not comprehend the gospel at all, in its richness and glory, as it will be comprehended in the future effusions of the Spirit. We see men as trees walking. We are purblind, groping our way among shadows. The time is coming when men will be as if endowed with new senses, so vivid, so intense will be their consciousness of spiritual things. God will no more be thought of as afar off, but nigh unto all who call upon him. Heaven will no more appear as a distant and dreamy world of the imagination. Its fragrant odors will be inhaled, and its happy songs will be heard by those who dwell upon the earth. Love to Christ will be no more a frozen compound of obligation and self-interest; but a well of gratitude and joy, springing up to everlasting life. Then property will all be consecrated to the best uses.

What is now extorted reluctantly, by the pressure of duty and the commands of conscience, will then be the spontaneous promptings of an ever-cheerful and ever-living love. Holiness to the Lord will be upon the bells of the horses; and commerce, and art, and enterprise, will flow on musically and joyfully in the channels of justice, love and mercy. The half-and-half life of the best Christians is only prophetic of that future power of the Spirit, when renewed man shall once more be a LIVING SOUL. The most godly men, of these modern times of revived evangelism, are but the shadows of that approaching form of the Christian man, who is to be "filled with the Spirit." Primitive Christianity did not fulfill that great promise. Beautiful was the simplicity of the early disciples of Christ. That quality is to be regained, copied and surpassed. In stature, we are children but once. But when we have outgrown infancy, and the body has reached its maturity, and the intellect its strength, the glory of our nature is in becoming little children again in simplicity of spirit. Even so the church, led through the discipline of ages, adult in strength, clothed with the sun for knowledge and power, will find her highest perfection and exaltation in superadding to all these gifts and graces the simplicity and love of those who first followed Christ as "dear children." Literally may it be true, in a sense, never imagined by ancient piety, that, as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, even so will the coming of the Son of Man be. These electric nerves,

which make the air to throb with thought and life, not always to be the heralds of mere political and mercantile tidings, will be the vehicles of religious news and religious love. Nor is it any freak of our imagination, to suppose the time may come when, as the people of God are assembled at the rising of the sun for praise and prayer, the lightning shall report it from the east, '*The Lord is here;*' and the lightning shall flash it back from the west, '*The Lord is here,*' and so the "tabernacle of God shall be with men. He shall be their God, and they shall be his people."

Long before that time shall fully come, we, fathers and brethren, will have passed from the earth. What then? Have we no relation to it? Verily, we are living in the dispensation of the Spirit. Ours is the day of preparation; in some regards more privileged, since faith, patience and labor are the instruments of future success. Better are our times than those of our fathers. For their fidelity, for their quick discernment of the ways and work of God, we may well be thankful; but the future is all bright with promise for us and our children. Our fathers are still with us. Their grateful spirits are over us and among us, when we meet to prosecute the work which they began. As the martial hero, whom poetry has described on the eve of battle as new-strung with life, when, at the tap of his drum, the shades of his ancestors came thronging around him, in the dusky air; so do we feel ourselves cheered, ennobled and exalted, by the memory of the good and the great, whose

faces smile on us from the past and from heaven; the serene and hopeful Worcester, the sagacious Chapin, the devout Lyman, the generous Phillips, the manly Huntington. We knew not how to spare them when Evarts, Cornelius, Wisner and Armstrong were taken from the world; but we have found that they are not lost to us and our cause, now that the heavens have touched them. In the inventory of available means by which the church is to conduct her conquests, we could not afford to subtract the influence of those who have already died in the service. Our dead missionaries are as eloquent as the living. The brave soldier who was bearing home the heart of his King, in an urn, to be entombed in his native land, when sorely pressed and in danger of defeat, rose in his stirrups, and, before the eyes of his troops, threw the precious treasure far in advance, into the very thickest of the enemy; knowing that this would be the surest method of inciting his countrymen to press forward to the rescue. The church has thrown many precious hearts into Heathenism, as the pledge and the motive for further advancement. Those who have sent their Newells, Lathrops and Huntingtons, their Fiskes, their Halls and their Grants, their own sons, daughters, brothers and sisters to die in Asia, Africa and the islands of the sea, have never so much as thought of abandoning a cause already endeared to them by so many precious associations. A thousand living hearts and homes in America are drawn towards the lands in which are the graves of our deceased missionaries. As

Abraham bought a cave in the field of Machpelah, as a burying-place for his household, a pledge of his faith in the divine promise, that the whole land should one day belong to his posterity, so is every missionary grave, in every heathen country, a similar proof of our belief that the lands in which they lie will hereafter be converted unto Christ. Tocat will not be Mohammedan, when Henry Martyn shall rise in the last day; nor will Aleppo, nor Ceylon, nor the Isle of France, nor China, be lands of delusion, when those who have gone from our homes and our churches to sleep therein, shall greet the light of the promised resurrection. Towards that vast result everything advances. There are eddies and back currents in our largest rivers; but the main course is on and on, resistless and magnificent towards the ocean. The quiet Merrimac, on whose peaceful banks this missionary organization had its inception, beareth greetings to-day to the broader and deeper Ohio; and both clap their hands together, as they flow on to meet the Ganges and the Euphrates. These mighty valleys, covered with corn, laugh with gladness, in prospect of that spiritual affluence which they are yet to distribute over all the earth. The churches which have sprung up on the edge of the wilderness, fast as the forest has dropped before the march of civilization, instead of being themselves beneficiaries, in need of assistance, have, many of them, already become, and more will yet become, the most munificent almoners in a service which is destined to endless growth and reproduction. The footsteps

of our children are already on the shores of the Pacific. Before their fathers have left the world, from the "Golden Gates" which God has given us, they look out upon those Christian islands, which sparkle like gems in the sea, converted, in our own life-time, from barbarism to the dignity of an intelligent, self-governed and religious people. Our language and our religion already encircle the globe.

We pledge ourselves, therefore, to no doubtful issue. This world was not only made *by* Christ, but FOR Christ. Every loyal thought, every pious act, is auxiliary to that kingdom of the Redeemer which has the oath of God, and the decree of eternity for the certainty of its triumph. For that result, Faith waiteth with calm serenity; her hand upon her anchor. Christian calmness is not the offspring of doubt, but of conscious strength. God has anointed his king on his holy hill of Zion. Clouds may hang around its top, and billows may break at its feet, but that mountain standeth on its eternal foundations. Oppose in heart or life the dominion of Christ, and the wheels of the prophet's vision roll over us and grind us to powder. Acquiesce therein, and we become identified with that numberless throng who will swell the train of His triumphs and reflect and share the glories of His reign. We shall die; but Christ liveth. Because He liveth, we shall live also. Good and faithful men shall be jewels in the diadem of our God, which will sparkle when the stars are dead.

OUR COUNTRY FOR THE SAKE OF THE WORLD.

A

SERMON

IN BEHALF OF THE

AMERICAN HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

PREACHED IN THE CITIES OF NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN,

MAY, 1851,

BY

REV. DAVID H. RIDDLE, D.D.,

PITTSBURGH, PA.

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SERMON.

PSALM 67: 1, 2.

GOD BE MERCIFUL UNTO US, AND BLESS US, AND CAUSE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON US.

THAT THY WAY MAY BE KNOWN UPON EARTH, THY SAVING HEALTH AMONG ALL NATIONS.

The beautiful principle embodied in these words, we propose, on this occasion, to apply to the subject of Home Missions; for rightly understood, we think it places that enterprise in its most attractive and sublime relations. This principle, if we have apprehended it, is, that the establishment and prevalence of right religious influences and institutions in our own land, is the surest and speediest method of securing the evangelization of the world. The principle originally applied, of course, to those who lived under the Old Testament dispensation. This Psalm belonged to the liturgical service of the Jewish church; and was a portion, therefore, not merely of the private devotional reading of that people, but of their public religious education. It was designed and adapted to develop a proper spirit in the mass of the people, and to shape the genius of the ancient church.

The peculiar structure of the passage shows the close relation existing between the spiritual prosperity of God's ancient people, and the salvation of the nations of the earth. "God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us." In these words is acknowl-

edged God's blessing as the true source of national excellence and prosperity, and the only security of their glorious institutions. But why did they so earnestly desire this blessing and the perpetuity of their national institutions? "That thy way"—God's revealed method of salvation—"may be known on earth, thy saving health"—God's means of curing the moral maladies of man—"among all nations." "God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear him." This view of the passage, which accords, we think, with all just principles of philosophy, exhibits the ancient church in a lovely, to some, possibly in a novel aspect. Even in the ancient church, when under tutors and governors, till the times appointed by the Father, there was cultivated an expansive benevolence, which embraced the wants and wretchedness of the race—a spirit which taught them to esteem themselves trustees of the blessings of God's salvation for "all nations." To every child of Abraham his native land was peculiarly lovely, associated as it was in every hill and valley with so many glorious recollections of the past; the land of promise, where the battles of the Lord had been fought by the heroes of faith; where the bones of the Patriarchs reposed; where the Ark of the Covenant dwelt, and the Shekinah appeared. In their jubilees piety and patriotism blended in the rapturous cry, "He hath not dealt so with any nation." But when the true spirit of the dispensation of types and shadows was imbibed, their country, the glory of all lands, was most glorious in its destined relations to God's plans towards the world,—loveliest, as the chosen centre whence the "lines" of "saving health" should "go forth through all the earth," and bless and beautify "all nations." A genuine patriotism baptized with the spirit of religion, became, as it always must, a blessed and world-wide

philanthropy. In his nation and country was embosomed, and afterwards manifested, "a light" which was to lighten the Gentiles, as well as be "the glory of his people Israel." When the church should obey the voice of her Lord, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee," then nations would come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising. The forces of the Gentiles, the abundance of the sea, the flocks of Kedar, the rams of Nebaioth, gold and incense, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together,—the peculiar products of every clime and the glory of every kindred, were to beautify his sanctuary, and make the place of his feet glorious. And for this purpose, to them were intrusted the Oracles of God, and to them pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God, and the promises. Theirs were the fathers, of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever.

A Jew, rightly trained by the inner spirit and genius of this dispensation, would therefore prize his institutions, and pray for their continuance; would most earnestly of all desire God's blessing, the sunshine of his face and favor on his native land, for the sake and salvation of others, yea of "*all nations.*" "God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us, that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations." "As the new wine is found in the cluster," potentially and in purpose, and one saith, "destroy it not, for a blessing is in it," the Jew would rejoice that one whose word was omnipotent for preservation, had said this of his land and nation, because in it, to God's eye and the eye of faith, was found an element, not yet indeed matured, the new wine of the

kingdom of God, which yet all nations were to drink for refreshment and salvation—the prelibation of a nobler cup at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Brethren, as Americans, and especially as American Christians, we are privileged as was the ancient Jew, and for analogous reasons, to love our country, and to pray for God's blessing and the sunshine of his favor on our native land! Patriotism, without boastful presumption, may say, "He hath not dealt so with any nation." God never made such another country as ours. The sun, as he goes careering and rejoicing as a strong man to run his race, from the one end of heaven to the other, does not shine on another land like this. Yes! we may, and for good and substantial reasons, LOVE OUR COUNTRY. But there is a nobler sentiment which should be enkindled in every soul, and incorporated with every passion, and refine and ennoble every thought and feeling and action of all our mighty population—OUR COUNTRY FOR THE SAKE AND SALVATION OF OUR WORLD. If we are true to our mission, and imbibe the spirit of our Master, and walk worthy of the manhood of the church, and be not rebuked by the manifestations even of its pupilage; American patriotism, baptized by piety, must become a blessed world-embracing—world-benefiting—world-saving philanthropy!

We should seek the blessing of God on our country, and labor for its spiritual prosperity, and the universal establishment, in all our borders, of christian institutions and their collateral and consequent influences. And he is not a Christian, in deed and in truth, who does not do this to the full extent of his ability and opportunity, by his wealth, example and influence. But Oh! what an increment of motive and energy will be added to all, if we do this, as the willing instruments and conscious

trustees of the great God, for the speedy and universal evangelization of our race.

On this high ground, we desire to place the enterprise, and obligations, and glory of Home Missions. We plead and labor for the establishment and extension of a sound ministry, and the evangelical influences which invariably cluster around it, beneficent to man and conservative of his interests in all his relations. By the enlargement of Home Missions, correspondently with our unparalleled enlargement of territory, and increase of population, we desire to secure the prevalence of true piety and christian principles at home; but in so doing, we are pleading and laboring for a world's redemption, for the good of a race for which Christ died, and over which he is set to reign; and thus, indirectly, indeed, but effectually and practically, we are fulfilling the injunction of the Master, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." We try to fulfil this intensive dispensation of christianity in our land as represented by David, that so "the mustard seed," the symbol of its extension, may grow to its destined proportions, and happy spirits from all nations may sing amidst its branches, thence to take their flight, in joyous myriads, and nestle amidst the branches of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God, where all at last, of every tribe, and kingdom, and clime, will sing together the new song of Moses and the Lamb.

Let our whole land be leavened, our country thoroughly evangelized—let all our institutions be brought under the sanctifying influences of christian principles; let all our population, high and low, rich and poor, learned and rude, from the President who occupies the people's house, to the peasant who inhabits the lowliest hamlet or hovel of our Western wilds, be baptized with the spirit of Jesus Christ; let Christianity of a pure apostolic

type, reign without a rival in all our councils, modify all our legislation, be the inspiring genius of all our commercial, agricultural, and manufacturing interests; let its precepts direct the application of our increasing and superfluous wealth, and the grace of its author guide us in projecting and prosecuting our schemes of philanthropy; let America, in a word, as the result of God's blessing on her institutions of religion and organs of benevolent action, once fully realize her responsibility to God, and see aright her mission to mankind, and the way of God would soon be known on earth, and his *saving health* would soon be experienced among all nations. Right institutions, civil and religious—the common heritage of man, and which appertain equally and inalienably to all nations, and which we hold in trust for the rest of the race, would soon be enjoyed by this dark and troubled world, tossed so long by tempests on the surges of unavailing change. The prayer of the great American church of all denominations, caught from the ancient oracle, should be, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us, that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations." And every one who has a heart to love God, his country and his kind, should say, Amen! For it is the prayer and response of enlightened patriotism, enlarged philanthropy, and true Christianity.

This position of Home Missions is based on the assumption of the immense influence of our country, for good or evil, on the other nations of the earth,—a postulate which we presume will be questioned by no intelligent Christian or citizen who has allowed his mind at all, or intelligently at least, to dwell upon the subject. The providence and past dealings of God seem to say to our country, "Who knoweth whether thou art come

to the kingdom for such a time as this?" In the arrangements of that Being who "setteth up one and putteth down another," whether it be spoken of a nation or a man only, we have come to a position of peculiar, at least, if we cannot say peerless eminence, amongst existing nations; to the possession of extensive, if not incomparable influence, giving us incalculable power over the rest of the world. With a gladness of gratitude, not unmingled with solicitude for the fearful responsibilities involved, we gather evidences of this, alike from the acknowledgment of friends, and the unwilling but not less unequivocal admissions of our enemies; from the hopes of the struggling masses, and the fears of the dominant and oppressive minorities of the earth. And was there ever "such a time as this," when so many elements derived from the intimations of prophecy and occurrent events, combined to constitute and justify the expectations of a crisis, and when the possession of power involved such mighty responsibilities? Granting that there is to be an end, as unquestionably there is an expectation, that God—who has allowed these anticipations to be gradually formed in the great heart of humanity, deepening and becoming more definite from age to age—means to meet and fulfil them; that the scoff of an atheistic age, "all things are to continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," in never-ending cycles of expectation and disappointment, is unphilosophical, as well as untrue; do not the signs and the tendencies of the times, the voice of prophecy, the wants of the world, the deep cry of our baffled race "made subject to vanity," all seem to indicate, that soon God's "way is to be known on earth, and his saving health among all nations?" and that our country, for this purpose has been raised up, and trained,

and disciplined, and preserved through all our past vicissitudes and perils as a nation?

Surely God has a purpose in so ordering events, that elements of power, at particular periods, should come into the possession of particular nations, so that they may exert a decisive influence on the destinies of the age and the fate of the world. "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace," said the Saviour, to a nation of old; "but now they are hid from thine eyes." Thus it has been often in the past history of the world. If nations could have seen their dispensation, as we now see it—could our light have been thrown back on their path, or the issues thundered in trumpet tones, how different would have been their consciousness of their mission, and possibly, the course of their conduct.

At one period, had one more onward step been taken, Carthage, the representative of African, instead of Rome, the representative of European civilization, might have triumphed, and been mistress of the world: and at another, had some other general, instead of Grouchy, been selected, who would have scorned to taint his itching palm with gold, the tide of battle might have been turned at Waterloo, and with it, the fate of the world. God, who "hath determined the times, and the bounds of our habitations before appointed," seems to have purposed that our country, if conscious of her mission and prepared to meet it, may exert a mighty, possibly a decisive influence on the destinies of the earth, and have a glorious part assigned her amidst the last acts of the long drama of time. And shall it be said of us, "Oh! if thou hadst known in this thy day?" Or shall we try to realize our true mission, and come to the consciousness of God's kind intentions before it is too late? There is danger indeed of unduly

modifying the interests and probable results of our own period, and of exaggerating every present crisis, and of glorifying our own particular mission. Many such a presumed crisis has passed, and the world abideth still. Heaven and earth have been invoked, in regard to the perils or prospects, now forgotten, or remembered by the thoughtful student or antiquary with the smile of pity or contempt. But surely "the end cometh."

There is a great temptation, also, to exaggeration among Americans. But aside from all these self-exalting exaggerations, in the sober and solemn light of facts and statistics, and the deep responsibilities they involve, we can hardly adequately measure the present, and especially the prospective greatness and consequent influence of our country. This impression is deepened by every view we can take of our country.

Look at the extent of territory, embraced in our present limits, immensely enlarged by recent annexations and acquisitions, requiring new editions of geography and alterations of maps every year to keep pace with our progress. Stretching already from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from wintry Maine to golden California! What a country! What an immense sea coast! And then a northern boundary of glorious inland seas—God's highways of commerce and communication from one extremity to the other!

The same impression is made, if we look at the *physical resources of our country*—the almost immeasurable capacity of sustaining population, and the almost infinitely varied productions of her soil. The natural resources of the American continent, it is computed, would afford sustenance to 3,600,000,000 inhabitants—four times the estimated present population of the globe. The Western country alone, could supply the whole world with bread-stuffs! I remember to have seen at

one time, years ago, on the levee at St. Louis, a pile of such, half a mile long, and nine feet high!

Again, this impression is deepened, if we think of the *prospective population of our country.* It is conjectured, that fifty years from this time, we shall have a population of 75,000,000; and 100 years hence, of 275,000,000. In other words, where there is now one person, 50 years hence there will be 5, and 100 years from this time 16. And these will not be serfs or paupers, but American freemen, enlightened by education, conscious of their rights, and privileges, and powers, whether moulded and restrained by religion or not. Long before this latter period, our people, reinforced from the effete nations of the old world, will have filled up the vast basin of the Mississippi, and stretched across the Rocky Mountains to the shores of the Pacific, and be occupying centres of commercial wealth and of moral power, in close proximity to China and the East; and thus, empire and civilization, completing the mystic cycle, will reach the point whence they began their march westward round the world! Recent developments prove how speedily their centres can be moved half across a continent. Long before that time, too, the appliances of locomotion and transportation, now going forward, will be completed. Intelligence will be transmitted, with lightning speed, from one end of the continent to the other. From Boston and New-York, to San Francisco and Oregon City, dispatches can be sent in a few seconds, to hasten vessels of steam across to China, or Japan; and men may travel continuously from Maine to California without breaking the Sabbath.

Again, the same view is confirmed if we think of the *enterprise of our country.* How many hundreds of thousands of square miles of territory have we settled already; and how many tens of thousands of miles

of canals and railroads have we constructed, and are now constructing and projecting! What immense primeval forests have given place, as by enchantment, to villages and towns and cities! See how agriculture, and commerce, and manufactures, and schools, and churches spring up along the path of American enterprise! In virtue of this characteristic the United States have already become the third, if not the second in the rank of commercial nations. The rapidity of our growth in this respect, throws Tyre, and Venice, and Holland, and England altogether into the shade. We now compete successfully with England in furnishing ships, engines and machinery for other nations. We excel and undersell her, in almost every market of the world; and by superior diplomacy, share with her in the results of her conquests in India and China. At the wharves of Pittsburg we fit out vessels for the trade of the Orinoco. American artisans build railroads for the Autocrat of Russia. They construct steamers for the Sultan of Turkey, and build and drive coaches across the desert for the Pacha of Egypt. We shall soon have lines of communication across the Isthmus of Darien, and a continuous communication to the Pacific, across the continent. But a few years ago, we carried on a war with one nation of the New World, and without inconvenience, fed at the same time the starving nations of the Old. Go where you will over the globe, and you will find Americans—amidst the icebergs of the Northern and Southern Poles, in the ports of China, India and Japan, in the Bosphorus and the Baltic, at the foot of the Himalayas and the Caucasus, at the World's Fair in London, and in search of Sir John Franklin!

In the same connection we may notice the element of power involved in *our unity*. With this immense

population, and almost measureless resources, we shall have, unless evil counsels and sectional animosities prevail—which God in his mercy forbid—the influence of a united people. There is nothing like this in Europe. The ten toes of the great image, part iron and part clay, have no common principle of cohesion. European influence is frittered, from the fact that it has had no unity since the age of Charlemagne. Europe is but a congregation of nations of different languages, habits, and religions; and the traveller feels it as he passes from Britain to France, Spain, Germany, and Italy. But power, as it passes into our hands, comes to one people, speaking the same language, the language of Milton, Shakspeare, and the English Bible, having one literature, and one great common Soul. Amidst all other ominous aspects, it is cheering to see how soon the process of homogeneity and nationalization is perfected here. Contrary to all antecedent reasoning, and in face of the Latin adage, "*Cœlum, non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt*," it is a fixed fact, that men of all nations and languages, are here unified and Americanized! It seems as if the great God meant of all these materials to "make one new man," a type of humanity embracing the separate excellencies of all other forms. The element of power, for good or evil, involved in this unity and nationality, is immense. Already the name of America, embodying our institutions and the weight of our example, to the hope of millions, is strangely magical, in the ears and hearts of the savage and civilized portions of the Old World. What will it be, if fifty years hence finds us as now, "E Pluribus Unum;" when the new man, now comparatively in childhood, shall have grown to the measure of the stature of his destined proportions? What will be the influence of such a united and immense people,

for good or evil, to scatter christianity and its temporal accompaniments and eternal consequences, or circulate pestilence and death over our world? In this view especially, the problem of perpetuated union, to the christian philanthropist, presents reflections of unparalleled intensity and interest. It is especially in the light of the the great idea, our country for the sake of the world, that the question of division and secession should be contemplated; and that Christians are concerned to know whether the centrifugal forces must necessarily be predominant, or whether one national life cannot be made to pervade this great land, notwithstanding differences of sentiment, and interests, and peculiar institutions.

If we look at these elements separately, especially if we combine them together on the most obvious principles, it must be allowed that our influence will be great; the weight of our example must be felt, the spirit of our institutions will be copied, and the type of our christianity or infidelity will be reproduced over the globe. We are set for the rise or the fall of many in our world. Nations unborn will rise up and call us blessed, if we become their benefactors, or load us with their heaviest curses, if we disappoint their rightful expectations. Oh! my country, after traversing thy beautiful prairies, and vast rivers, and inland seas, and viewing thy growing territory, and population, and future prospects, especially these elements of power; who that has a heart to love God, or his race, can refrain from praying, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us, that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations!"

We do believe—who can indeed help believing?—that if these elements of power are christianized and consecrated to the glory of God, and the spiritual good of

men; if in our voyages and circumnavigations to every port where we traffic, and to every people where we transport our fabrics, we take the Bible, and a beautiful exemplification of its precepts in our own lives and principles; if American enterprise becomes synonymous with christian activity, and the love of Christ—the noblest and sweetest passion—comes to constrain commercial men, with a power and constancy equal to the love of money, which is the meanest; the way of God will soon be known on earth, and his saving health among all nations. On the other hand, if these elements be left to flow forth in selfish and vainglorious channels, unregulated by conscience and a sense of accountability; if the American name becomes identified in the apprehensions of the nations of the earth, with cunning, covetousness, and accumulation; then, no tongue can tell or heart conceive the influence for evil which will be exerted all over the earth, by our country.

We try to abound in hope; but we cannot altogether repress our fears, when we study the history of the spirit of trade in past ages, and trace, with facts before us, the premonitory symptoms of the decline and fall of the ancient centres of commercial greatness, which have successively figured and faded on the tableau of time. It is sad to muse on the elements of the glory of ancient Tyre; it is a solemn study, in view of the portraiture of the prophet Ezekiel, and the accomplished fact, to remember the late prediction of the Secretary of the Treasury in regard to this city, that "*soon the balance sheet of nations will be adjusted in New-York.*" We are a great people, indeed, and our greatness is increased on every side, and is increasing every decade. While traversing the mighty West, a man finds himself saying, "This is a great country—great

for good or evil, for Christ or Antichrist!" Which shall it be? Whose shall be these prairies and cities, and this stalwart yeomanry? What part will they take in the great battle of principle? Whose forces will they swell in the last conflict? There is one reply every Christian would love to make, but there is an alternative also, in which all this enginery will be for evil—part of "the sublime mechanics of depravity," more potent, because more polished instruments of perdition.

Yes! American Christians, in the nature of the case and from the analogies of the past, it is safe to conclude that we must be a great people, but not necessarily or universally a holy people. This, with the blessing of God, depends on the efforts and sacrifices of those who have pledged themselves, and covenanted with God, to make the world's salvation their paramount concern, and every thing else subservient thereunto; and who, understanding aright the relations of our country to the world, as we have tried to depict them, have resolved to do their part under this stirring idea, "at such a time as this." For, let no man delude himself with the dream, alike contrary to fact and philosophy, that without evangelical influences and institutions, any thing else, however excellent, will preserve us as a people from ruin. There is no absolute warrant of safety in the peerlessness of our position, the grandeur of our mission, or the awful results of our failure; no promise of God, to prevent the most terrible catastrophe which fancy can conceive, or past history enables us to realize, provided we do not use the means which God has put in our power. Unless Christians, by their efforts and self-sacrificing zeal, make christian institutions, and their collateral evangelical influences commensurate with our widening population; unless we send the educated christian missionary along with the emigrant, and plant churches

and Sabbath schools where the hand of enterprise has felled the forest or dotted the prairies with farms and villages ; our country, the star of hope and guidance to bewildered nations, will itself wander, and we shall lose an opportunity of blessing mankind, such as God never gave to any people since the world was created. Nothing but the power of the Gospel, made effectual in the hearts of men, and influencing them in all their relations, can save a free country like ours from destruction—a country where no despot in church or state does or dares force outward conformity to religious requirements; where the people rule, and make their own laws ; where public opinion is well nigh omnipotent, and independence of all control, human and divine, is the most striking and characteristic natural tendency. Here, the alternatives are moral principle,—making every man a law unto himself, without which outward law is a cobweb—the wildest anarchy, or military despotism. The Gospel planted these colonies with "seed sifted from three kingdoms." Gospel institutions have made us what we are, and nothing but the Gospel can preserve us from destruction, or enable us to fulfil our high destiny towards the race. It is not enterprise, or physical improvements, or a glorious constitution and good laws, or free trade, or a tariff, or railroads and steamships, or philosophy, or science, or taste ; but the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, appearing to every man, and inwrought into the heart of every man, that can save us from the fate of former republics, and make us a blessing to all nations.

The issues involved in this question depend very much, too, in our apprehension, on the character assumed and influence exerted by the West—on the fact, in other words, whether we supply its wastes and build there in a few years "the foundation of many genera-

tions." Religious institutions do not rise spontaneously, or necessarily keep pace with the growth of population. The human heart naturally does not value or secure evangelical influences. Its uncounteracted tendencies, if not to barbarism, are certainly to irreligion. Men every where, and in all ages, love darkness rather than light; especially the men who go out from the influences of churches and pastors, to seek their fortunes and dig for golden ore, and build them towers whose top will reach unto heaven. And such is the character of much of the population crowding the West. Scorched by the revivals, and restive under the restraints of other States, they go like Cain of old to found or find a city of repose. The restless spirit of change, the feeling of Daniel Boone, drives men from New England or New-York, to Illinois or Iowa, and then to Wisconsin and Minnesota, and then to Oregon and California. The outward wave is rolling onward, without regurgitation, till it meets the Pacific, where next to dash, God only knows! No one who has not travelled in the West can conceive aright of this subject, and the momentous issues involved in it. In the absorbing cares of business, the multiplicity of outward incitements and ever-recurring pageants, the uniform flow of affairs year after year, in older States and cities, we are prone to think that all is well, and the West will take care of itself. But to be able to pray the prayer of the text aright, every Christian ought, if possible, to see the West for himself. Good old deacons from New England, staid divines from churches where order and orthodoxy are triumphant, New-York merchants, retired civilians, and philanthropists, in order to realize their obligations, should go and survey the land where their children or children's children are to dwell—to be blessed or cursed, be blessings or curses, according as we do, or

neglect to do our duty. This rapid transfer of population from the older settlements to the new, and the unparalleled tide of emigration from the Old World, to which recent events there will only give additional momentum, is a new development in the economy of nations, giving rise to new duties and responsibilities, and adjusting Christian obligation on a new scale of projection altogether.

> "No pent up Utica contracts our powers,
> But the whole boundless continent is ours,"

to care for, and to christianize. It is hard, after all we have read, to conceive with what rapidity the West is filling up with population. In some parts, "a nation is born in a day." Fifty years ago, a line drawn from Pittsburg north to Lake Erie, and southward along the Alleghany and Cumberland Mountains, to the Gulf of Mexico, would have embraced a white population of less than 500,000; now the State of Ohio alone contains a small fraction less than 2,000,000; Indiana little less than 1,000,000; Illinois 850,000. The total population of the States and Territories west of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio River, in 1830, was 1,840,000, less than Ohio alone at this time; while the entire population of Wisconsin amounting to upwards of 300,000, and of Iowa a little below 200,000, has been received since 1838. The city of St. Louis has regularly doubled its population every six years since 1831, when it numbered 6,000; at which time Chicago, Milwaukie and others, now young giants, had no existence. A brother in the Convention in Chicago, a few years ago, said, "In June you see one cabin on a prairie, passing along in September, you see forty."

It need not and ought not to be concealed, that in the West there is a singular "energy of error," and tendency to extremes of opinion on all subjects. Every

thing there is on a large scale—rivers, forests, prairies. However philosophically accounted for, the same is true of their errors also. Errors, like weeds, grow rank in the human heart, without constant cultivation; while truth, like the valuable productions of the husbandman, requires constant, patient and diligent cultivation. The errors of the West are of gigantic proportions. Their leaders are bold, reckless and revolutionary. One of the most striking characteristics of the West, too, is the spirit of self-reliance, not to term it self-assurance, which manifests itself in church and state, among saints and sinners. They pronounce judgment on subjects which have perplexed the wisest heads of all time, with a self-satisfaction absolutely thrilling. They have, beyond all doubt, "the spirit of power," whether blended or not with the elements of "love and a sound mind." They are like their steamboats of high pressure, which have vast propelling power, whether they have prudent captains and sober crews or not. Like one of their representatives in Congress, many of them feel themselves head and shoulders above the rest of mankind.. Every variety of human opinion, too, every heresy ever conceived in the human heart, or studied in the silent chamber in past ages, every plunge of radicalism, and every grade of infidelity is there. The errorist and revolutionist, from the older States and the other hemisphere, there find the material all plastic to their hand. The extremes of opinion, represented in our most sober communities, and trying in vain to work themselves into the religious and social structure, may there be carried out to the full extent, without regard to consequences. The mighty West seems like a great caldron, where every heterogeneous element is fermenting, foaming, and every now and then overflowing. Far off in these wilds you may meet travelling agencies for

New York books, a certain kind of literature, there known as the "Yellow Cover Literature," the miserable trash of paid scribblers—the staple productions of some large and flourishing eastern establishments. Whether we sleep over this subject, or wake up to a proper sense of duty and danger, while some ecclesiastics are fearing lest colportage will trench on their official prerogatives, there are bold and strong men there, "not afraid to speak evil of dignities," night and day sowing tares, scattering broadcast over the land their pestilent errors, loosening the bonds of morality, sapping the foundations of society, and baptizing the young with their baleful influences. What we do in this matter, we must do quickly, if at all—with our might, or the crisis is past. The preponderating political and religious influence of our country will soon be found, if it does not exist already, in the West. If we wait, if we trust these matters to chance, or please ourselves with dreamy anticipations, and do not rise and build, other hands will be found to give shape and character to this region, and seize these elements of power, and use them for their own purposes. There is a tide in human things, moments when the light dust may turn the balance of a nation's destiny one way or the other. And what but an educated, orthodox ministry, a ministry acquiring influence by intellectual superiority, and retaining it by intelligent piety and persevering efforts—just such a ministry as the Home Missionary Society proposes to send out—will meet the exigency created by these circumstances? What other conservative principles, than evangelical piety and institutions, can we trust amidst the tempests of passion and error which threaten to ingulf all that is dear to us as patriots and Christians, and all that is embosomed for our world, in the purity and perpetuity of American Christianity?

In addition to all we have said, you are aware that systematic overtures are making to bring our country, through the predominating power of the West, and thus our world, under Roman Catholic influence; to fight in that arena the battle of Popish or Protestant supremacy! On this point we are not, and never have been alarmists. We do not blame the Roman Catholics for their zeal. We honor them, on the contrary, for their consistency. They believe there is no salvation out of the church—meaning the Romish church; that the best temporal and civil interests of man are identified with the possession and prevalence of the true religion; and that every interest must be subordinated to the establishment and extension of Christ's kingdom on earth. With these principles, what else could we expect than the most vigorous and well-directed exertions to gain preponderance of power in our country, whose institutions are destined ultimately to spread over the world? They are fully cognizant of the facts and principles we have been stating. They know that our country must have immense influence, one way or the other, on the nations of the earth, and that the West is the destined seat of power. They lay their plans, and plant their institutions accordingly. They project their cathedrals, schools and colleges, on a scale of magnificence commensurate with our loftiest anticipations of the future. They build for future ages. They believe in perpetuity. They take hold of human nature by every handle to turn it to their purposes, and despise no avenues to human affection, or instrumentalities of human confidence. It is by no means uncommon to meet large Catholic churches where there are, now, scarcely any Catholic hearers; and female seminaries where there are scarcely any other than Protestant patrons. Verily, the prize is worth contending for—the privilege of a preponderat-

ing influence over this land, and thus over the world. As was said in the ancient games—"*Detur dignissimo*" —the prize to him that wins it. In this matter, God will not reverse the great principle of his economy, "The hand of the diligent maketh rich." It will not do for us to be forever quarreling with the Catholics, calling them bad names, accusing them of ambition, conspiracies, and what not, while we are doing nothing to establish Protestant institutions. It is pitiable to be groaning perpetually over Catholic progress and encroachments, while we lavish our wealth in schemes of self-glorification, without equaling, or at least emulating the zeal and benevolence of those whom we dread. We must rear better schools, give a better education to youth of both sexes, found libraries, sustain a learned and orthodox ministry so liberally, that they can cope successfully with the Jesuit. We must scatter evangelical books and a christian literature, over the whole field. Yea, we must personally labor in our respective posts, learn the luxury of making money to give away in large-hearted schemes of benevolence, if we would not see another generation, seduced by the gorgeous ceremonies and splendid pageants of Popery, forsaking the religion of their forefathers, and surrendering the institutions of America to the power of Antichrist.

Roman Catholics are in earnest. They say, "We must make haste; the moments are precious. America will one day be the centre of civilization, and shall truth or error establish there its empire? If Protestants are beforehand with us, it will be difficult to destroy their influence." Such is their avowed policy, and its expected results. Are we prepared to contemplate such a policy, and such results, with composure? Is it nothing to us whether truth, in their sense of the term, that is, Popery, or error, by which they mean the Protes-

tant faith, Protestant morals, and Protestant institutions, shall be established in our land, and thus reign over the earth?

Catholics are united too, as well as earnest. Would to God, Protestants were also. We want a blessed evangelical alliance, with the spirit of the text for its motto, *Our country for the sake and salvation of our world.* Whatever denominational distinctions and lines of operation our imperfect sanctification and absorption in non-essentials may render still necessary or unavoidable, this great idea should outmaster and control every other, and make every one who loves Christ and labors for the salvation of our country, our brother beloved and honored, whether he casts out devils by our formularies, and follows with us or not.

A village in the West, for one half its population, which is Catholic, has one church and pastor, one Lord, one faith, one baptism; the other half, which is Protestant, has five or six pastors and churches, and each has his separate "Psalm, doctrine, tongue, revelation and interpretation!" Yet, "God is not the author of confusion," but of peace, in all the churches of the saints.

Brethren, the mission of our country, and the alternative it involves, has not been conjured up for the occasion, but it is placed upon us by Providence, and grows necessarily out of the facts, principles and statistics we have been contemplating. In the light of the idea we have endeavored to elucidate and incorporate with your heart's deepest feelings, we can best see the reason and meaning of all God's past dealings with our country. In this aspect, our country must ever appear, to all capable of apprehending her position and relations, most lovely and glorious—as the signet in the right hand of God Almighty, by which he purposes to seal upon our

fallen humanity its last type of beauty and blessedness. In the light of this purpose, we read with peculiar interest the facts of our antecedent history, civil and religious, from the beginning, hitherto. We can see why he planted these colonies; why he has preserved them; why he has interposed in answer to prayer in our darkest perils; why he has kept alive the spirit of piety, and granted us so many seasons of revivals; why he suggested the idea of voluntary associations; why he originated the Tract Society, and the glorious appendage of colportage; why, when the career of emigration first began, he put into the hearts of good men to form the Plan of Union; why, in advance of that unexampled career of expansion in recent times, which finds limits only by stretching from ocean to ocean, he originated this glorious Association of Home Missions, with its collateral blessings, to keep pace, if possible, with the march of an almost incalculable multiplication. Yes! it does seem as if God, our Heavenly Father, had prepared us, has been teaching us, for something great, and good, and glorious,—as Joseph was trained in youth, and then raised out of prison, to save much people alive in time of famine; and as David was called from tending sheep to lead the armies of the living God; and Hadassah was advanced from orphanage to the side of royalty to save her people, at an awful crisis.

Oh! my country! "Who knoweth whether thou"—lone orphan, cast out from thy fatherland and cut off from a mother's kindness in thy youth, and now Queen regnant, imperial and peerless—"hast not come to the kingdom for such a time," and for such a purpose "as this?" And after all, wilt thou fail to understand thy mission, and fall in with God's obvious purpose, and appreciate aright thy privilege and responsibility? In schemes of self-glorification or aggrandizement, wilt

thou lose the glorious opportunity of impressing thine image, as God's signet, on the rest of the earth? O, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, American Christians of this generation! "Shall our country be the home of piety and virtue, or the mighty reservoir of irreligion and vice? Shall the voice of prayer and praise, or of cursing and blasphemy be heard throughout her borders? Shall our literature and science, and commerce and agriculture pay their tribute to the King of kings, or serve to foster to giant growth the worst passions of the human heart? Shall this great nation be rent with sectional jealousies and scarred with the judgments of the Most High, or shall its future millions, as they rise in successive generations, walk in the light of his countenance, and, appreciating themselves the value of civil and religious liberty, extend their blessings to every land illumed by the sun or laved by the sea?"

GOD BE MERCIFUL UNTO US, AND BLESS US, AND CAUSE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON US; THAT THY WAY MAY BE KNOWN UPON EARTH, THY SAVING HEALTH AMONG ALL NATIONS.

AMERICAN HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The object of this Society is to assist congregations that are unable to support the Gospel ministry, and to send the Gospel to the destitute. It seeks and sends forth missionaries; by counsel and pecuniary aid, it encourages the people to help themselves; strengthens feeble churches, gathers new ones, settles pastors; and thus renders *permanent* the institutions of the Gospel.

The Society was organized in 1826, by delegates from the Presbyterian, Congregational, Associate Reformed, and Reformed Dutch denominations, and had then in its service 169 missionaries. The fifth year, the number of missionaries was 463—the eighth, 676—the sixteenth, 791—the twenty-fourth, 1,032. The first year's expenditure was $13,984—the fifth, $47,247—the eighth, $80,015—the sixteenth, $94,300—the twenty-fourth, $153,817 90.

The *twenty-fifth* year of its operations is briefly noticed in the following abstract from the last Annual Report, presented May 7th, 1851:

SUMMARY OF RESULTS.

More than one-third of those who were present at the organization of the Society a quarter of a century since, have ceased from their labors. Death has also removed, the last year, Rev. CALVIN CHAPIN, D. D., and Rev. DAVID PORTER, D. D., Vice-Presidents of the Society; Rev. HENRY WHITE, D. D., one of its Directors; KNOWLES TAYLOR, Esq., its former Treasurer; and Rev. WASHINGTON THACHER, the Agent of the Society in Central New-York.

The Society has had in its service the last year, 1,065 ministers of the Gospel, in 26 different States and Territories: in the New England States, 311; the Middle States, 224; the Southern States, 15; the Western States and Territories, 515.

Of these, 640 have been the *pastors* or *stated supplies* of single congregations; and 425 have occupied larger fields. *Four* have ministered to congregations of *colored people;* and 41 have preached in foreign languages—10 to *Welsh*, and 29 to *German* congregations; and *two* to congregations of *Norwegians* and *Swedes.*

The *number of congregations* supplied, in whole or in part, is 1,820; and the aggregate of *ministerial service* performed is equal to 853 years.

The pupils in Sabbath schools and Bible classes amount to 70,000.

There have been *added to the Churches* 6,678, viz.: 3,855 by profession; and 2,823 by letter. Many of the Western Churches have been visited with the special effusions of the Spirit. *Seventy-seven* missionaries make mention in their reports of revivals of religion in their congregations; and 366 report 3,096 hopeful conversions.

THE TREASURY.

Resources.—The balance in the Treasury, April 1st, 1850, was $15,553 69. The *receipts* of the succeeding twelve months have been $150,940 25; making the resources of the year, $166,493 94.

Liabilities.—There was due to missionaries, at the date of the last report, $11,935 77. There has since become due, $151,515 41; making the total of liabilities $163,451 18.

Payments.—Of this sum, $153,817 90 have been *paid.* The remainder—$9,633 28—is still due to missionaries for labor performed. Towards liquidating these claims and redeeming the additional pledges on commissions which have not yet expired—making in all, $64,906 49—there is a balance in the Treasury of $12,676 04—the greater part of which was received near the close of the year, and is available only as a means of cancelling the present indebtedness of the Society to its missionaries.

PROGRESS.

Thirty-three more missionaries have been in commission than in any preceding year, and this increase has been mainly in the Western States and Territories; *forty-one more years of ministerial labor* have been performed; and *two hundred and forty-five* more congregations blessed with the preaching of the Gospel.

Forty-three churches have passed from a condition of dependence to that of *self-support; sixty houses of worship* have been completed; *fifty-five* others repaired; and the building of *forty* others commenced.

During the twenty-five years of the Society's labors, not far from 800 *churches,* which had been reared and nurtured by its instrumentality, have passed from the list of beneficiaries, and are now supporting their own Gospel institutions; some of which are among the strongest and most influential churches in the land.

AUXILIARIES AND AGENCIES.

The Report gives detailed statements of the prompt and liberal manner in which the views of the Executive Committee have been seconded by the local Boards of Agency, and by the State and other Auxiliaries, While nearly all evince their activity by an increased number of Mis-

sionaries and of Churches assisted, they all report a larger number than in any previous year as having become independent of foreign aid. The sound and healthful growth of the missions is seen in the number and value of the houses of worship erected, in the increasing energy of measures to promote temperance, in the establishment of Sunday and Week-day schools, and in general, in the yearly progress of whatever promotes the stability of the churches and the order of society.

GENERAL VIEW.

The favor which God has shown to the Society during the past year, in preserving the lives of its officers and missionaries, and crowning their labors with such a measure of success, furnishes fresh occasion of gratitude, and new ground of encouragement. This record of the labors of the year, completes the history of this Society for a *quarter of a century*. Within this period, how has the field of its operations extended, and its work increased. Our frontier has receded from the banks of the Ohio to the shores of the Pacific. Seven States have been added to our confederacy, and 12,000,000 to our population. In all the elements of national importance, we have made unparalleled progress; and the work appropriate to this Society has increased in like proportion. And, though it has not accomplished all that with greater resources it might have accomplished, yet the wide fields where it has gathered rich harvests for Christ—the multitude to whom it has distributed the bread of life—the 3,000 churches it has aided, and the 100,000 souls it has gathered into the fold of the Great Shepherd, testify that it has not labored in vain.

In the prospective growth of our country for another quarter of a century, we foresee the accumulating responsibilities of this Society.—While, in the older States, it must "be watchful and strengthen the things that remain that are ready to die," it must also go forth "bearing precious seed," with the advancing tide of emigration, as it rolls toward the setting sun. In planting Gospel institutions in our great central valley, and on the shores of the Pacific, a work is to be done for Christ, such as he has intrusted to no other people. *It must not be delayed.* To this work let the friends of the Redeemer gird themselves anew.—Encouraged by his past favor and the promise of his presence and aid, let them prosecute this enterprise with increasing zeal and on a more extended scale.

8.

THE AMERICAN CHURCH.

A

DISCOURSE

IN BEHALF OF THE

American Home Missionary Society,

PREACHED IN THE CITIES OF NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN,

MAY, 1852.

BY

REV. LEONARD BACON, D.D.,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN NEW HAVEN, CONN

NEW YORK:

PRINTED FOR THE AMERICAN HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

BY BAKER, GODWIN & CO., NO. 1 SPRUCE STREET.

1852.

DISCOURSE.

TITUS 1: 5.

THAT THOU SHOULDST SET IN ORDER THE THINGS THAT ARE WANTING, AND ORDAIN ELDERS IN EVERY CITY, AS I HAD APPOINTED THEE.

This, and some other passages of the same sort, describe one essential point in the primitive propagation of the Gospel. The Apostles and their associates went everywhere, preaching the word, reasoning out of the Scriptures in the synagogues of Judaism, and disputing, if they had opportunity, in the schools of Gentile philosophy. But this was not all. They baptized individuals and households, on a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of the world—thus marking a line of distinction between the holy commonwealth of the redeemed and the world of the unbelieving. But this was not all. They wrote books and tracts, giving them such publication and currency as was then practicable; thus putting upon record, for all nations and for all ages, the great facts and elementary principles which they were commissioned to promulgate. But this was not all. There was another step to be taken, without which Christianity would hardly have had a place in history. Up to this point, if their work be regarded as ending at this point, all their results are incomplete—the half-collected materials of a structure—

the dissevered parts and members, on the one hand, but not compacted into symmetry and strength; the living spirit, on the other hand, but not embodied as an organic force, with a local habitation and a name. "For this cause," says Paul the Apostle to Titus the Evangelist, "left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee."

In the great island of Crete, Paul seems to have labored in person, and he seems to have been interrupted and called away before the ordinary plan of his operations had been carried out. Some arrangements were still wanting, which Titus was expected to supply. In every town or local community where converts had been made, he was to organize the Christian fellowship by instituting elders, the proper officers of a stated worshiping assembly. In other words, the work for which the Apostle had left him in Crete was that of constituting local churches, and so completing the introduction of the Gospel there. The same thing was done wherever the Apostles performed their office. By the establishment of churches—local Christian societies for worship and for religious instruction and discipline—Christianity became something more than a matter of individual opinion, conviction and experience; something more than a merely domestic influence, hallowing in God's name the relations of household love and duty; something more than a new element infused into literature and philosophy, and taking effect upon the progress of human intelligence from age to age. It became an incorporated and organized religion, with its own arrangements and institutions for self-perpetuation, and for aggressive influence. Christianity establishing itself in local churches, became a new social institute within

the State, yet not of it; a new order and form of human association, with an independent life of its own and yet connected by a relation of constant action and reaction with that old order of things into which it had been cast.

The American Home Missionary Society devotes itself to a work of the same kind with that for which Titus was left in Crete. It has for its own special department of effort, on the broad field of Christian activity in our country, not merely the work of diffusing Christian knowledge, not merely the work of winning individuals to personal faith in Christ, not merely the work of multiplying and sending abroad the living preachers of the Gospel, but the work of planting Christianity as an organized religion and an organizing power. Books, however excellent, and however profusely distributed; the itinerant and desultory preaching of the Gospel, whether by book-venders and tract distributors, or by professional and authenticated ministers of the word; Sunday-schools, with their apparatus of libraries, teachers and traveling missionaries, may cooperate powerfully for the advancement of Christian knowledge and experience; but such efforts, if they are all, work no organic change in society. Another kind of effort must accompany them, or follow them, to "set in order the things that are wanting," or else, so far as permanent influence is concerned, their labor is in vain.

Allow me to say, in this place, that, in respect to ecclesiastical arrangements, the Home Missionary enterprise, as represented by the Society for which this service is performed, is not a sectarian undertaking. It attempts nothing more than to establish local churches —churches in the New Testament sense of the word—

organized parochial societies of Christian people, for the support of public worship, and for the various duties of Christian neighborhood and communion. With the internal arrangements of these churches for the management of their own ecclesiastical affairs, with the relations which associated churches may see fit to establish among themselves for the sake of mutual recognition and intercourse, or of mutual helpfulness and authority, it does not intermeddle. The particular church may or may not conduct its own affairs on purely democratic principles; it may or may not incorporate itself with some larger and more comprehensive organization; the Home Missionary Society does not concern itself with such questions. The plan of our great charity is essentially opposed to the denominational or sectarian spirit. So long as the churches which it plants, or which it aids in the period of their weakness, are evangelical in worship and doctrine, holding that view of the Christian system of which the word *evangelical* has become, in modern times, the recognized and current designation; so long as they are essentially self-governed, and not priest-governed; so long as they do not formally exclude from fellowship with them the great body of churches on which this charity depends for its resources, so long it cares not what regulations and arrangements, or what denominational standards may be adopted by any particular congregation. It has to do, not with the extension of organized sects or denominations, but only with single churches, local churches. As a purely American institution, called into existence by an exigency in the growth of this great American people, and operating to extend the dominion of Christ over all the territory of our Union, it devotes itself to the one work of setting up Christianity in the form of local Christian

churches, that shall operate from age to age upon the character and destiny of the countless millions of our population.

Thus there opens before us, at this point, a great subject of thought and inquiry:

THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTION OF LOCAL CHURCHES AS RELATED TO OUR AMERICAN CIVILIZATION.

I feel that the subject has its difficulties. I am fully conscious that I shall not succeed in giving it such illustration as it deserves. But I am sure that even an imperfect illustration of it will help us to some new views of the position which this Home Missionary work ought to have in our affections and in our plans of patriotic and Christian beneficence.

I. Let me remind you, then, that religion, embodied in religious institutions, is an essential and potent element in every form of civilization. Religion, in the generic sense of the word—the consciousness of dependence on an invisible and infinite Power—is not only an inseparable part of our human nature, belonging, like reason and the faculty of moral perception, to the constitution of every individual mind; it is also, like them, essential to the constitution of society. It has to do with all human relations, but most of all with those complicated relations of man to man which constitute the conscious unity of the commonwealth, and by virtue of which the life of the State runs on in undying and uninterrupted identity through successive generations of individual mortal existence. Though religion is in one sense wholly individual; though true religion, considered as a religious experience, is the awakening of the individual man to a just view of the relations be-

tween himself and his Maker; it is none the less true, that the religious instincts and sensibilities are developed in society. They have their place and their activity in connection with every social affection and every social duty, giving a sanction from the Infinite to all the complicated relationships which hold society together, and connecting the visible and transient, at every point of human life, with the invisible and the eternal. They are eminently sympathetic, yearning after communion, unfolding and strengthening themselves in the consciousness of fellowship; so that some form of religion, not merely as a private personal conviction, but as a social institution, with public or social worship, is a necessity of human nature. Thus they take their shape and direction from social influences; and in one form and another they are incorporated into the character and historic life of nations and races. Thus all history is full of the influence of religion as a leading element of civilization. Of this it may be a sufficient illustration to say that in every land that ever had a history, the great architectural remains and monuments, from which, more perhaps than from any historic records, we learn the extent and the distinctive character of the civilization which once flourished there, are remains of religious architecture. The colossal structures of Egypt; the august colonnades of Baalbec and Palmyra; the disinhumed remains of Assyria; the stupendous excavations and sculptured mountains of India; the old, rude columns on Salisbury Plain; the fantastic mounds reared by an unknown race upon the soil which now we call our own, all testify to the power of the religious principle in human nature, and to the invariableness of its presence as an element in every form of civilization. And how plainly does history, in its records, teach us

that the introduction of a new religion, into any country, carries into the civilization of that country a consequent and proportionate change.

II. Turning now to recollect for a moment the distinctive characteristics of our American civilization, and to inquire how it differs from the civilization of other ages, and from the existing civilization of other countries, we find, at the first glance, certain great outlines sufficiently definite for our present use. We see an entire separation of religion from the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate, and an absolute freedom of voluntary association for worship, and for all religious purposes. We see the religious element everywhere at work; the people everywhere organizing and sustaining their religious institutions altogether independent of the civil government, which also they organize and sustain. We see the principle of local and municipal self-government carried to the greatest practicable extent, in opposition to the centralization of power. We see an equality of personal and political rights, such as has never existed elsewhere, and, growing out of it, a constantly counteracted but ever elastic tendency to equality of condition. We see an unparalleled diffusion of intelligence and of the spirit of inquiry and free thought, stimulated continually by the genius and the working of our political institutions. We see twenty-five millions of people, spread over a territory of various and boundless resources, and trained to the habit of relying on themselves rather than on the government for guidance and control, and of exercising their own faculties of thought and judgment on matters of public, not less than of private interest. We see this teeming population increasing every year by a stupendous immigration from

all regions of the ancient world; the immigrant myriads bringing with them from beyond the ocean their own languages and fashions, and their own forms of religion or of irreligion, yet mingling with the mighty mass, unable to resist its tendencies, and slowly but surely losing their foreign peculiarities,—as the waters of the Mississippi, poured into the Gulf and the Atlantic, and slowly mingling with the rolling tides, lose their freshness, deposit the soil that they have brought from distant plains and mountains, and are gradually lost and undistinguishable in the world-embracing ocean, without discoloring by one shade or turbid stain its boundless azure.

III. And now, with these views of religion as a necessary element in every form of civilization, and with these views of the peculiarities by which our American civilization is distinguished, we may take the position that in our country, and under our social and civil organization, the strength of free and Protestant Christianity, considered as an organized religion and an organizing power, must reside in local and self-governed churches. To illustrate this, let me point out to your attention certain facts and views, which show what local churches have been in the progress of our history to the present moment, and what they are likely to be in the future.

1. It is worthy of notice that the history of the origin and progress of Christian institutions in this country, hitherto, is almost wholly bound up in the history of the origin and growth of local churches. In New England, as you are well aware,—which has had by its religious and political institutions, and by the character which those institutions have wrought into its

people, so wide an influence upon the political and religious organization of the country as a whole—the institution of local churches, self-constituted and self-governed, was at first the end for which every thing else was instituted. The Puritan emigration from old England was an emigration for the express purpose of founding in the wilderness local, separate, independent churches, which should control the founding of every thing else; and around which, as so many distinct centers of vital power, there should arise the laws and magistracies, the order, the industry, the justice, the popular virtue, the universal education and intelligence, the frugal plenty, and all the stern and saintly beauty of a Puritan civilization. Whatever there is in New England that warms the heart of the New Englander with glad and reverent affection at the thought of her gray rocks and her green hillsides, when his filial regards turn eastward from the prairies, or from beyond the Rocky Mountains,—is most intimately associated with the influence of those New England churches. Whatever errors there may have been in the ancient legislation there, whatever violations of the principle of religious liberty, whatever unwise attempts to make men religious, and to keep them in right ways of thinking by the force of law, there was never in those Puritan commonwealths a centralization of ecclesiastical power; never a priestly corporation independent of the people; never any religious organization higher or stronger than that of local churches; and at this moment all the embodied and organized religious influence there is summed up in the fact, that in every township, and in every parochial district, the local church is present, the organized congregation of free Christian men, the self-governed Christian society, with its stated worship, with

its house of prayer, with its teaching ministry, and with all its apparatus of instruction and influence.

But I would not be understood as speaking of that particular form of church-order which is called Congregationalism, or as claiming for the churches thus denominated a special advantage, in this respect, over churches bearing other names. What was the origin of Presbyterianism on our soil? It did not begin here, as it began under the hands of the Reformers in Scotland, in a General Assembly, distributing and parceling itself out into synods and presbyteries, and ending in the organization of parochial arrangements. On the contrary, it began in local, separate, Presbyterian congregations, each with its own arrangements for worship, discipline, and the ministry of the word; and it was the voluntary confederation of congregations previously independent of each other, which gave being to presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies. So with other churches of similar faith and order, but of a different genealogy—the Reformed Dutch, the German Reformed, the Lutheran,—trace their history back to its earliest sources, and, in each instance, you find a particular congregation in one place, and another particular congregation in another place, and then another and another, till at last these many congregations, drawn together by special affinities of faith and order, of ancestral feeling and perhaps of language, are confederated for mutual helpfulness in classical and synodical assemblies. But in all these instances, and even in others which are very unlike to these in some respects, but of which I could not speak without entering into explanations which the limits of this discourse preclude, the strength of the organization, its efficiency in maintaining and extending the kingdom of Christ, and especially the efficiency

with which it dispenses the Gospel, as a vital and organizing force in society, molding the character of the people; the efficacy with which it works to carry into households, and into the experience of individual souls, the light and life of holiness, must be found, not in its supposed or attempted centralization of power, but in the strength, the number, and the spiritual health and activity of its local churches. And to a thinking, generous, Christian mind, the value of all these ecclesiastical confederations, by whatever name they may be called, and whatever may be the theory on which they are constituted, lies in their ability to subserve the true interests, and to promote the legitimate efficiency, of parochial churches, and to provide for the multiplication of such churches in a just proportion to the wants of the population. The presbytery, the consociation, the classis, the convention, the synod, is for the churches; not the churches for it. Its strength is not in itself, but in the churches whose confederation has created it. Its value is measured exactly by what it contributes to their edification and efficiency. If the churches which it includes are, by virtue of their relation to it, more peaceful, more prosperous, more potent in their local influence, then it answers a legitimate and important purpose, and deserves to be honored accordingly. But if, instead of this, the churches gather from it only a thorny harvest of strife and debate; or if it becomes a mere arena for feats of logical and theological gladiatorship, then, let Diotrephes admire it and rejoice in it as he may, it answers no good end, and forfeits its right to existence.

Pardon the desultory character of these remarks. They are intended to illustrate, and, if I mistake not, they do illustrate the position that Protestant Evangeli-

cal Christianity upon this American soil is identified, in its beginning and growth, and in its present position and influence, with the origin and progress, the prosperity and efficiency of local churches. Perhaps I have said more than enough; and yet I cannot refrain from adding, that if any intelligent and impartial man will set himself to study the institutions of this great metropolis, he will find that not the colleges, nor even the public schools, not the learned academies, nor the charitable institutions, nor even the diversified apparatus of extra-ecclesiastical religious enterprise, can be compared in importance with the churches, the natural depositaries, the legitimate conservators and dispensers of all Christian influence. And when he takes his census of the churches, and sums up their power, and makes his estimate of their capabilities, he will think of them only as so many organized congregations of Christian worshipers, with their pastors and other officers, their sabbaths, their places of public worship, their lecture-rooms, their Sunday-schools, their meetings for edification and brotherly communion, their arrangements for aggressive action on the masses of ignorance and impiety that lie around them; and he will take no account of presbyteries or associations, of classes or synods, unless it be for convenience in the prosecution of his inquiries, and the summing up of his results. This very church, for example, in whose consecrated edifice we are this evening assembled, how shall we estimate its importance as one of the institutions of this metropolis? This house of prayer, these Sabbath assemblies, the sacred tie that binds these congregated households to each other, the covenant of baptism, the remembered blood that bought our pardon, the eloquence on themes of infinite grandeur that has here

distilled from lips touched with the fire of God's own altar, the impressions and experiences that have taken place within these walls, the decisions that have been formed here for eternity, the consolation that, in connection with these ministrations, has been poured into the bosom of affliction, the rainbow-splendor with which hope here nurtured has so often overarched the river of death, the great thoughts and emotions that have here been born and cherished in believing souls and that have gone out hence to be translated into god-like action, the mischievous influences that have been counteracted from this center, the wanderers that have been reclaimed, the outcasts that have been saved, the miseries that have been alleviated,—Oh how can we conceive of the infinite history! And all this influence is the influence of—what? A single, organized, local congregation, taken by itself. Who, when he attempts to estimate this influence, and when his heart swells with the thought that there is such an institution, and that this is only a specimen of what churches are doing for the moral welfare of this great metropolis, can think of asking to which presbytery the church belongs, or whether it belongs to any? How completely would any such question let us down from the altitude at which we see the church itself in its legitimate and blessed influence!

2. And now, though we begin to feel the narrowness of our limits as to time, let me lead you to inquire whether it is not a fact, that in all ecclesiastical organizations within the scope of our American civilization, there is a steady tendency toward the increase of what we may call the parochial element in ecclesiastical order, as opposed to the element of consolidation. I have called your attention to the fact that the history of

Protestant Evangelical Christianity among us is to a great extent, when rightly viewed, the history of local churches, as local centers of evangelical influence upon the people; but now I wish to lead you to a wider view. The tendency to the increase of this parochial element of church-order, cannot be easily measured by a reference to those religious bodies in which the parochial element has always been predominant. There is, however, a powerful evangelical body, the history of which is in some respects singularly contrasted with that of the various churches to which I have already made particular allusion. I speak of that body here with no sentiment that is not consistent with the profoundest respect for its Christian and evangelical character. I thank God for the Methodist Episcopal Church in these United States. I thank God for that wonderful system of evangelism which has done so much for the advancement of our common Christianity, and which gives promise of so glorious an usefulness in the future. But what is it which that great itineracy is everywhere accomplishing? What are its achievements as a permanent and organizing influence in society? How is its usefulness to be measured upon the scale of history? Wherever it works, it is working to form permanent congregations, local, organized churches, as fixed centers of local influence. And do we not see that the Methodist house of worship, after a little while, is no longer a mere preaching station? The benches are displaced by pews; the original division of the assembly is superseded by a distribution into households; the itinerant preacher, who hastened from one station to another, has become a temporary pastor; and presently the congregation, trained from the first to an intense religious activity, begins to be conscious of its

corporate unity, and of its duties, and its rights too, as a local, Christian church. It is not for me to prognosticate the issue of a pending debate. It is not for us in this place to intermeddle with affairs that are not our own. But may we not confidently expect, from the deep sagacity that has characterized the progress of that religious body heretofore, and from the evident blessing with which God has attended it, that whatever may be the immediate result, the end will be, not conflict, not disorganization and confusion, but such an adjustment as shall provide more adequately for the development of the parochial element of church-order, without impairing the aggressive force of that system of evangelism?

We might take a still wider view. The Roman Catholic system has long been struggling to establish itself in this country. Having to do almost exclusively with the foreign element in our population, as distinguished from the people that have been born and trained under purely American influences, it has hardly begun to feel, as yet, the forces that are destined ere long to act upon it. But is there any intelligent observer who is not aware that in the bosom of that great system of spiritual despotism, as it exists among us, there are already some movements significant of what will be hereafter. A Roman Catholic congregation of American citizens, born and nurtured on the soil, and in the atmosphere of our national life,—nay, a Roman Catholic congregation with only an infusion of the true spirit of American civilization,—when once it begins to be conscious of something like a corporate unity, begins to be strangely conscious of corporate rights and corporate duties.

There is meaning in this. Wherever it appears, it is a phenomenon which invites an inquiry into the reason of it. And the reason of it is found in the congruity

between the parochial principle of religious organization, and that principle of local and municipal self-government which is the grand distinction of our political system, and which is most thoroughly carried out where our political system exists in its most perfect and compacted form; which is where the territory of the State, after having been divided into counties, is again divided into townships, and where the inhabitants of every town are a complete local democracy, enacting their own by-laws in popular assemblies, choosing their own magistrates, taking care of their own free roads and free schools, and having a part by their own town-representative in the legislation of the State.

IV. May we not come, then, to this conclusion: That which we have seen to be the Protestant Evangelical form of church-order, the system of parochial churches, each a local center of all Christian influences, is essential to the right and successful working of our great principle of local self-government in the civil state. Our entire system of social organization—the entire genius of our people expressing itself in political institutions—dreads and abhors the centralization of power, refuses to collect the majesty of government into any one imperial locality, sets up everywhere the municipal, local democracy, and insists that the people, at every point at which a political body can be constituted, shall attend to their own business of governing themselves. In such a structure and system of society, the only religious principle, so far as order and organization are concerned—the only principle, I mean, that is in harmony with the genius of the people, or that can adjust itself without conflict or collision to all the machinery of their political life—is the principle of

parochial and self-governed churches. This is the distinctively American method of religious organization. The people—a Christian people in their descent and history, in their language and literature, in their recognized standards of morality, and in their ideas of God, and of the worship which men owe to their Creator—are the State; as such they organize themselves for political and civil purposes under the forms of a free self-government, resting on the basis of municipal institutions universally distributed; and this is the American political system. The same people, acting in reference to their religious wants and sympathies, organize themselves everywhere, voluntarily and according to a Christian freedom, in stated assemblies for worship and religious instruction; and this is *the American church system.* The Church and the State are everywhere present to each other, and everywhere mutually dependent. Each system is complete in itself, yet each is intimately related to the other, and to the living whole of which they are the living parts. There is no rivalry between them, no clashing of jurisdictions, no conflict of powers, no subordination of one to the other. The State everywhere protects the Church from outrage, recognizes its rights by recognizing and maintaining the right of free association for religious purposes, guards every worshiping assembly against disturbance, hallows by law the Christian Sabbath as the people's day of rest, inaugurates its own proceedings in legislative assemblies, and often in courts of justice, with religious services, conducted according to the order of the local churches. So, in return, the Church everywhere gives life to the State; everywhere it penetrates with its vital force all the municipal livisions and arrangements of the com-

monwealth,—as the nervous system in the human frame is spread through every limb and organ, every muscle, every fibre, the vehicle of life and sense and motion; everywhere, if adequately developed, it works upon the common mind and life of the people, keeping alive the sense of relations to the invisible and the remembrance of truths that reach beyond the sphere of sense and time. And this parochial, self-organizing principle of evangelical Christianity, everywhere present; everywhere building the house of prayer; everywhere providing the ministry of the life-giving word; everywhere touching the most sacred springs of human sympathy, by exhibiting the simple symbolic rites of Christian faith and worship; everywhere establishing its order, its discipline, its multiform activity; and thus acting everywhere with a steady, molding influence on the sentiments and habits of the people, trains the people into the capacity of self-government. It deals with them from their childhood as intelligent and reasonable beings, and as capable of acting under the excitement and guidance of the sublimest motives. It holds them to the duty of exercising their own faculties of thought and judgment on themes of infinite reach and grandeur. It makes them familiar with the consciousness of a responsibility to God, which rises far above all other responsibilities, and includes them all, and from which no considerations of personal or worldly expediency can absolve them. It teaches them in these methods the grand lesson of free and manly thoughtfulness, and of free and manly self-control. Accustoming them in their various religious communities to discuss and regulate, under one form or another, and in one degree or another, their own religious affairs, by yielding a gen-

erous deference to the judgment and the choice of the majority, it trains them for political freedom and for self-government, as members of the civil commonwealth. How happy the lot, how beautiful the aspect, of a great people whose institutions, thus organized in Church and State, spring as it were spontaneously from the tendencies and yearnings of the popular mind, and are adapted to the ends for which the Church and State exist in their harmonious co-operation—the Church and the State each resting on the basis of local self-government, and each the complement but neither the servant of the other—the people, self-governed in all their communities, free because they are Christian, and Christian because they are free!

But if we reverse this view, and instead of Protestant Evangelical Christianity establishing itself in those institutions of local self-government which are so congruous to its nature, suppose the ascendency of a different system, establishing itself, according to its nature, in the form of a consolidated spiritual despotism, how different will be the result! Look at that system, with the gigantic efforts which it is making to achieve for itself dominion on this hallowed soil. What if it shall gain in these broad realms of freedom the ascendency at which it aims, and for which it is drawing, as it were, to one center all the forces of fraud, cunning, wealth and organization, that can be wielded by the rulers of the darkness of this world? Let that system conquer; let its institutions, with no local self-governed Christian assemblies, become the predominant religious organization throughout our country; let it have, undisputed, the religious training of the people; let it teach the American citizen everywhere to bow in awe before

the divine authority of the priesthood, to forego the keeping of his own conscience, to renounce his right of judging for himself under the guidance of God's word and Spirit, and in the discharge of his personal responsibility to God; let it succeed in molding the hearts and habits of the people, by the action of its institutions, into accordance with its own despotic genius, and how completely will it counteract all the better tendencies, and extinguish the characteristic spirit of our existing American civilization.

With such an enemy working against us—an enemy so powerful in his resources, so unwearied in his diligence, and so deadly in his hostility to all that we value for ourselves, or hope for in behalf of our children, and our country, and the world—we are to "set in order the things that are wanting," and to spread the organized form and organizing spirit of free and pure Christianity, from beautiful New England, from this imperial New York, from the Atlantic shore adorned with cities to which the commerce of the world brings riches, westward through the disappearing forests, westward over the prairies, westward still, beyond the mountains so soon to be pierced and threaded by the iron path of commerce, westward, even to where our remotest west, in its golden pride, looking forth upon the Pacific, confronts the farthest and eldest orient, and is already making China and India tributary to the greatness of its future. How inspiring is the thought of effort and achievement in such a field! "Time's noblest empire," with resources that shame the riches of the world, with capabilities of power and progress that defy all calculation, and with a position of pre-eminent grandeur, in

relation to the destinies of the human race, is to be saved from the dominion of darkness and of sin, and is to be filled with the freedom of the sons of God!

This, then, is the work of the American Home Missionary Society. It undertakes to carry the Gospel with all its quickening and sanctifying influences, the Gospel, with its institutions and social order, the Gospel, not only as the offer of Divine grace to the individual soul, but also as an organizing power in the commonwealth, through all the length and breadth of this great empire. Wherever it goes, it puts its hand to the foundation, and helps to shape the structure of society. It does not merely scatter the seed of the word here and there in the wide and tangled wilderness; its work is to subdue the wilderness, to spread new order over its neglected vastness, to change its gloomy waste into the garden of the Lord. Where various currents of population, from the north and from the south, from the old world and from the new, with habits and tendencies as diverse as their origin, meet to mingle and be confounded, it sets up in that confusion of influences an organic self-perpetuating force that shall act upon unborn generations; and where the pioneer might, perhaps, have left to his posterity an inheritance of barbarism, it spreads over the subdued and renovated soil the light, the bloom, the living and perennial beauty of a Christian civilization.

A NATION SAVED FROM ITS PROSPERITY ONLY BY THE GOSPEL.

A

DISCOURSE

IN BEHALF OF THE

American Home Missionary Society,

PREACHED IN THE CITIES OF NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN,

MAY, 1853,

BY

REV. LAURENS P. HICKOK, D. D.,

OF UNION COLLEGE, SCHENECTADY, N. Y.

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DISCOURSE.

MARK X. 23 to 27.

"And Jesus looked around, and saith to his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And all the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished beyond measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus, looking upon them, saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."

A YOUNG man, with natural qualities so amiable that Jesus loved him, and yet with a heart so worldly that he could not give up his great possessions, had just gone away from the Savior, grieved at the strictness of his requisitions. From this incident, Jesus Christ took occasion to give to his disciples the very impressive instruction in the text. Riches exclude from heaven. The inclination to trust in them is so strong that they effectually shut the way of life from their possessor. Leaving human nature to its own course, the rich man would no more pass the strait gate than the camel would go through the eye of a needle. And yet the salvation of a rich man is not utterly hopeless. God, to whom all things are possible, has a way to save even those who have great possessions.

This striking truth is not applicable merely to rich men. Great nations stand in the same relation to it, and are in the same way concluded by it, as single persons. The natural course of a rich nation is to destruction. It will trust in its prosperity, and boast of its destiny, and lose its integrity, and bring upon itself

its own ruin. It will not open its eyes to its dangers till too late. Its wise men and great statesmen will not save it. Its very abundance will corrupt its own members, and if left only to its own resources it will go on to its dissolution.

But with God there is power to restrain and save a nation from the consequences of its own prosperity. His method of doing it is by the preaching of the Gospel, establishing christian churches and maintaining christian ordinances, and then pouring out his Spirit and kindling up pure revivals of religion over the land; and in this manner he so sanctifies the people and gives such elevated and vigorous spiritual life to public sentiment, that the nation can bear its growing greatness, and even pass on in its prosperity, making continually, physical and moral improvements. God can so save rich men, and rich nations; but, as fallen human nature is, it is impossible to save either in any other manner.

The general proposition, therefore, which I deduce from the text is this—THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SAVE A NATION FROM THE DESTRUCTIVE CONSEQUENCES OF ITS OWN PROSPERITY, EXCEPT BY THE GOSPEL.

The truth of this proposition may be seen *in apprehending precisely what a nation is.* The state cannot be a mere aggregate of individuals. The choices of each man in a community fix upon their respective objects, and the agency of each goes out to attain possession; and thus the whole community is put in motion. But these choices and their execution will be perpetually clashing and colliding with each other, and the free action of one will make the free action of many impossible. If one have his choice, many others cannot have theirs. Individual freedom must be public oppression. Each person, therefore, must be restrained by what is

due to the whole, and particular freedom be controlled by a regard to public freedom.

This interest in each, that others should be restrained by that which is due to the freedom of all, at once knits the community together, and makes the whole an organized unity. No one may live to himself. The whole have a right to restrain each, for the highest freedom of all. Thus the state *is* from the very activities of society, and has the right to make its own constitution and form of government.

It is thus manifest that nothing can be vital in the state, which does not come up into it from the life of its individual members. The laws of a nation are mere dead forms, except as the popular sentiment breathes its own life into them. A constitution will not create national life; it is the state which puts its own life into the constitution. The liberty and virtue of a nation must live and grow in the hearts of the people, or as a nation it has no liberty nor virtue. Its wise men cannot preserve its integrity by legislation; for although its laws were inspired, yet if they did not meet an answering sympathy in the public bosom, the whole statute-book would be a dead letter. Yea, were the state thus corrupt in its own members, its wise men, if there were any, would not be its legislators. The public will bring out of its bosom that which expresses its own sentiments, and the law-giver and the law will conform to the feeling, beating heart of the nation. Whether despotism or democracy, it will ultimately become *like* people *like* law—an administration which expresses the very life and soul of the social community.

Such is the state; and the Bible and long experience tell us what is man, of whom the state is made. Such an organization, with such elements, cannot bear perpetual prosperity. There is an inherent native depravity in mankind, tending constantly to excessive grat-

ification. The possession of wealth stimulates avarice; the presence of power kindles ambition; the allurement of pleasure induces voluptuousness. Where opportunity is given and restraint removed, indulgence follows. Solicitation brings consent, and vice grows in enormity as temptations multiply. The corruption of one generation perpetuates itself into the next, increasing crime with greater violence and familiarity with wickedness. Every man is intent upon his own pleasure or interest, and the public welfare is disregarded. Political peculation and venality are witnessed by only careless and listless observers; society has lost the moral energy which enspirits heroism and cheers patriotism; the virtue which frowns down selfishness and baseness, is gone; and every thing hastens rapidly to dissolution. The magistracy become perjured; the judges are bribed; witnesses are suborned; favoritism tramples over law; the moral life of the people, and thus the vital energy of the state, has died out; and national extinction is near at hand. Exclude anywhere the influence of the Gospel from man, and open the opportunities of great national wealth and power, and, no matter what may be the form of government over the people, it will be impossible to save their virtue or their liberty.

The same truth is also equally manifest *in the history of nations.* The lesson of warning is on every page, that the prosperity of kingdoms destroys them. They grow populous and powerful, their prosperity begets corruption, and they perish. Egypt was; but Egypt, in her power, and wealth, and numbers, is no more. Nineveh extended her walls on the banks of the Tigris, inclosing a population of millions, and spreading her power wide over Asia; but her luxury and drunkenness has long since made her a heap of rubbish. Babylon, once ruled the world; but she, too, has fallen from the excesses her riches had occasioned; and wild beasts roam

and satyrs dance, over the ground where once her walls and palaces stood. The very monuments of these kingdoms tell of their debauchery and effeminacy, as plainly as of their wealth and power, which induced their voluptuousness and perdition.

And so, also, the Persian Empire followed, proud in great armies, and splendid with riches; but her effeminate population became an easy prey to the Greek; and this mighty Grecian monarchy also fell in pieces from its own weight, so soon as Alexander's short life was over. And then Rome arose, holding law in its sternness and severity everywhere dominant, and grew slowly to universal empire. But her wealth was also her ruin. Luxury and venality and anarchy prepared the way, and the great metropolis of the world was sacked by hordes of northern barbarians. The richest and the strongest of modern European nations have had their prosperity but for few centuries; and the evidence accumulates among them, that great prosperity is incompatible with national integrity and security. One nation may destroy another by violence, before its own iniquity destroys itself; but wherever the trial has been fairly made, the prosperity of the nation has proved its downfall.

An Asiatic despotism may hold its sway over torpid millions for an indefinite duration, but this is no exception to the universal truth, inasmuch as these Pagan kingdoms cannot be said ever to have had national prosperity. Political liberty has never been theirs, to enjoy or to lose; and national wealth has never been diffused, to induce popular corruption.

From the great facts which history teaches, we thus confirm the truth, that to take man as he is, and as he makes states to be, and give him wealth and power, and let him take his own course, and he will dig the grave of any nation. It will be as impossible to keep him in

the strict paths of virtuous patriotism, as to drive the camel through the needle's eye. One may be a natural and the other a moral impossibility, but both alike an infallible certainty. God alone, by the interposition of Gospel grace, can hold a prospered people back from destruction.

And now, with this truth thus stated and established, the design is to apply it, in some special cases, to OUR OWN NATION, and show how our own prosperity is inducing most alarming dangers, which nothing but the Gospel can remove.

It is quite obvious, here, to remark, that so far as any nation has been endangered by its prosperity, ours is so preëminently. Never was such progress made, in the attainment of all that ministers to the material greatness of a nation, among any other people as in our country. Territory, population, industry, enterprise, wealth, power, all have accumulated beyond all former precedent. However other nations have been endangered by rapid growth, we more. And still another remark is quite as obvious—that we seem to be endangered by nothing but our prosperity. There is no external enemy for us to fear. There are no inward constitutional weaknesses, nor causes of national decay: our danger of death is only from plethora. Should our grand experiment of free self-government ultimately fail, it will doubtless be because our prosperity is greater than our virtue can bear. Not a cloud appears above our political horizon, that is not gathering and condensing itself from the full moisture of our own atmosphere.

The importance of this whole subject, also furthermore appears, in that whatever danger menaces a state, the great interest involved makes those dangers of momentous concern to every citizen. With this is so connected all that concerns the welfare of man, so inter-

woven is his weal with the state's safety, that whatever threatens his country puts also in jeopardy his own dearest interests. And with this consideration, I may ask a continued attention while I proceed to state—

Some of our national dangers from our very prosperity, and from which only God through his Gospel can save us.

I pass by those obvious and common evils which are the immediate results from the depraved abuse of wealth and power in all human history, since my design is particularly to consider some of our own peculiar dangers. An increase of luxury, dissipation, prodigality, inducing popular effeminacy and frivolity; a growth of ambition, ostentation, vain-glory, begetting national self-conceit, arrogance and insolence; all bringing in venality and corruption to elections, legislation, and judicial decisions, destroying the very life of all patriotism and public liberty,—this is common everywhere to the rapid acquisition of national wealth. We are as really and as imminently exposed to all these dangers as were any of the old kingdoms and republics which have gone down into the grave of nations, and from which the Spirit of God and the Gospel can alone save us. But, to notice more specially *American* dangers from *American* prosperity, I call attention—

1. *To the increase of Crime.*—This, perhaps, may be said to be the natural attendant of growing wealth in any nation; but there are circumstances which give to this evil peculiar significancy in our country.

Our political prosperity is in connection with, and helps directly to induce, great commercial and mercantile prosperity. The inducements to fraud, theft, robbery, midnight burglary, and murder, which thus

increasingly abound, are thrown not only upon our native population, but upon such as an unprecedented foreign immigration is pouring upon our shores. Of the many thousands who come to us annually from abroad, most are from the poor and many are from the vicious population of the old countries which they leave, and are thus of character or condition the most open to temptation, and the most liable to become criminal with their first introduction among us. Many of them are already adepts in crime and wickedness before they leave their own country; and in the loss of old restraints, and the as yet unappreciated force of our laws and the working of our systems of municipal police, it is not otherwise than to be expected that crimes and misdemeanors will multiply in the midst of us.

This need not be a topic for remark, as if it were something surprising; the wonder rather is, in our circumstances, that the increase is not greater. There is not another nation on the earth which could bear such an influx of foreign pauper and vicious population within it, and yet get so much control over it, as we have. The openings to honest industry, employment on the public works, and the cheap new lands of the West, are really taking up the great proportion of all this fresh material for violence and criminality, and employing it safely, usefully, and even virtuously, as it comes to hand. Still, our growing wealth and power and political freedom, vastly augment our danger from this one evil. The foreign criminal comes, and not only practices his own iniquities, but is most fearfully educating our own juvenile delinquents to the perpetration of the most dreadful enormities.

Add to all this the peculiarity of our own elective government, the tendency to wink at immoralities, and even crimes, for the sake of political suffrage; and

especially the difficulties on this account in shutting up the frightfully deepening stream of intemperance, engendering more crime in the midst of us than all which is imported, and it is impossible but that offenses will come, and greatly multiply among us. All this is the natural result of our growth, and that restraining influences are not coming spontaneously up to check it. Leave it to its own way, and the end is destruction.

But we only say here, that to the power of God in the Gospel all things are possible. You have only to look at what christian kindness and christian faithfulness have already done in a few short months, even in the most abandoned portion of this very city, and the evidence is as clear as that from old miracles, that the Gospel is the mighty power of God. We have only faithfully and promptly and perseveringly to apply it, and no sinner is so hardened that it cannot fit him for and take him into heaven.

2. *The influx of Foreigners.*—This is here adduced as having its dangers in another direction besides the increase of crime. With our national prosperity, and the poverty and oppression of the masses in European governments, the flow of emigration to our shores is as natural as the currents of air towards the points of highest rarification. Nothing indicates a check, but many things may probably even accelerate it for years to come. The current will flow, and left to its own course will work out its own changes. They may not so certainly and necessarily work destruction as the tendencies of some other agencies. The blending of Celt and Saxon, Dane and Norman, gave the world the Anglo-Saxon race; and perhaps this commingling of blood and crossing of races may greatly invigorate the stamina of even the American stock. But this cannot work itself out in the preservation of our free institutions, except under

an influence which shall assimilate the discordant parts, and so prepare them "as kindred drops to mingle into one."

To such a combination, natural causes are only slowly tending, giving long occasion for discordant interests and chafing animosities, under any coming aggravations, to ripen perhaps into incorrigible alienations. National habits and prejudices work themselves out very tardily from the exotic, and assimilate it very gradually to the indigenous stock; and these peculiarities become the more unyielding, when counter religious creeds and rituals come into perpetual collision; and more especially so, if the foreign creed be constantly receiving fresh vigor from new infusions of its native spirit. Romanism cannot naturally become republicanism. Very pressing and stringent circumstances must make it so in spite of its inherent antagonism, if it come at length to work harmoniously and cordially in the order of our free civil polity. Its constant struggle is against it, and the influence and accessions it receives from its old home keep it rigid and reluctant to any democratic changes. It will work its modifications into American Protestantism, while that shall be working its assimilations into Romanism. The changes will not be all on one side; and how far that from Rome may prevail, and yet leave our political liberty and free institutions safe, is truly a problem of vital importance to American freedom. Leave these conflicting forces to their natural action, and they will not safely adjust themselves. Watchful patriotism will not be so prompt nor so constant as selfish ambition. The aspiring demagogue will pay the price of liberty for the combined vote of priestly followers; and hostile elements will soon be at work in our republican administration, which will require quite another adjusting balance than popular elections.

This variety of race and religion is already operating powerfully through our whole social and political community; it is a natural result of our national prosperity, and will doubtless very much extend itself for many years to come. It must modify, and left to its own course it might completely revolutionize, our whole civil polity. The political wisdom and skill of no statesman is about to bring and keep such discordant materials harmoniously together. This is only possible to God, and his revealed method for it is the Gospel of his Son.

There is power in the Gospel to bring different races and opposing religions into one. The effort must be in this direction, to make them all study the Book of God together. Frank and friendly discussion, the preaching of Protestant truth in its purity, and full permission to the Catholic to preach Romanism as he will, but to meet him in candor and love, in faithfulness and firmness, at all times and in all places of the land,—this will ultimately assimilate all on the right basis. If the Protestant has a wrong spirit, and where the Catholic has a wrong sentiment, this will correct both. Perpetual dropping of divine truth never yet fell, in faith and prayer, on human heart so hard, that at length it did not wear the stone away.

3. *The growth of Slavery.*—If the slave himself is property, then is the increase of slavery an augmentation of national wealth; and if we exclude all right of property as claimed in the slave, still the profit of slavery is the grand motive for its perpetuation. And this grows more profitable as the state grows more wealthy. The increase of the quantity and value of slave products is an aggravation of all the evils and dangers of slavery itself. That would soon die in the pros-

tration of national credit and business; and thus here, as before, our prosperity is the occasion of all our danger.

And how great this danger is, may be partially estimated from the recent convulsions and present irritation and sectional jealousy through the land. I am not called, by my present design, to dwell upon the immorality of this institution, nor upon the wickedness and cruelty incident to its perpetuation; nor again, upon any imprudences that may have characterized the opposition to it; but some of the prominent facts connected with it show, even to the blindest, our imminent danger as a nation from it.

The public sentiment of the civilized world, not involved in the practice of slavery, is every year growing stronger and deeper in reprobation of it. The pulse of humanity beats fuller and quicker, and indicates that the public heart swells in tenderer sympathy for the slave, and in sterner abhorrence of his wrongs; and such sympathies and repugnances will manifest themselves in corresponding remonstrances and expostulations. On the other hand, growing national prosperity, accumulation of interest in slave property, and the augmented profits of slave labor, are calling out more strenuous defences of the institution, and enlisting greater numbers in upholding it, and its wider business connections raise up new apologists for it. As the abhorrence and remonstrance increases, so grows the defence and the determination to perpetuate it. Political ambition uses both sides as occasion offers, and greatly increases the rancor of the strife and aggravates the danger.

It may not well be said what the onward movements of Providence may do, in bringing in the competition of pauper free-labor, or supplying the products of present slave labor from other sources, or introducing other pro-

ducts which shall drive these from the market; but, for years to come, there is no other prospect but a deeper interest in this strife and a sterner feeling among the antagonists. In the prosperity of the nation slavery will grow with it, and its defenders and their tenacity of purpose will increase; and so also the growing philanthropy of the nation and the world will augment the abhorrence and intolerance of the evils of slavery. These antagonisms of interest and kindness are as deep in humanity, under the circumstances, as the law of the tides or the ordinances of day and night in nature.

Very wise men may have fondly hoped to avert the coming threatened explosion by political expedients, and laboriously arranged their balanced interests and established compromises. Resolute affirmations of "finality," and denunciation of all further agitation may occur; but he who knows how deeply to read human nature, very well understands that such elements in such antagonisms are not about to remain quiet. The truce is broken on both sides; from one comes the fierce denunciation, and from the other the fiery defiance. This volcano is not so capped over. These materials for an explosion would shake down far mightier mountain-barriers than any political compromises. The rich man may enter heaven as well as the rich nation pass through these storms safely. God alone can help; and verily I look for no other miracle of deliverance, than the application of the plain truth of the Gospel to both sides, with the blessing of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

That Gospel will tell the slave "to obey his master;" and it must so be preached to him. Even in "fear and trembling," he must be obedient; and this not only to "the good and gentle" master, "but also to the froward," yea, when so froward that the master "buffets" the slave for "doing well." But this very stress and

extremity of obedience determines unanswerably the principle on which the Gospel puts it. Not at all because the master has any righteous authority to so command; not that the Apostle was here defending the froward master's right against the right of his trembling slave; but solely because this was most expedient for the slave himself. You are in the power of a tiger, provoke him not. Soften his froward temper and quicken his conscience to tenderness, and make him to blush at every recollection of his cruelty and baseness, by showing the very spirit of your divine Master, who, when the insult and the scourging came, "opened not his mouth."

And so also to the other party, the same Gospel has the same doctrine to be preached. "Ye masters do the same things to them." If you have a froward and turbulent slave, "forbear threatening" him; do nothing to provoke him; "give to him that which is just and equal;" remember what terrible inducement the assumed authority you exert over him gives to him, to manifest the deepest repugnance and revulsion to your service. If you keep him in the family, do the duty of the head of a family to him; baptize him; religiously instruct him; train him up for the state and for heaven. Do this with the same ends of freedom and of piety as in the nurture of your child; and as long as such is due, you will have the approbation of your conscience and your God.

Such a Gospel, so preached, will save the nation even from the growing dangers of slavery. The missionary is to be sent with this Gospel, not only where slavery is not, but more urgently where slavery is. He may not slur over the plain message to the master, nor may he teach the slave to take violently his own rights. This is not so well for the general freedom or the piety of the slave. It is not the Gospel. It will not so readily bring

about universal emancipation. If the slave "may be free," teach him, by all means, "to use it rather." It is his right. There is great wrong in keeping in bondage, and not be every day educating for freedom, and fully giving it as soon as prepared for it. But if you are thus wronged, and are "called" of God, being a slave, "care not for it." Your title to heavenly liberty, as "God's freeman," makes your earthly bondage as nothing. I say again, such a Gospel, so preached, will save the nation. Like the rod of God it will work its miracles through the land, and no enchantments of the politician or the philanthropist can imitate it.

4. *The practice of annexation.*—Perhaps the genius of our government is such, that new territory and new States, to an indefinite extent, may be added to our republic; but in order that it may be done safely, the circumstances must be most carefully and wisely estimated. As the rich man prospers, he adds house to house and field to field; and if it be in the spirit of honest enterprise and prudent regard to family wants and public claims, his increased wealth and purchased acres may not injure him. But if he be moved only by selfish ambition and greedy avarice, this will certainly grow by that on which it is permitted to feed. The magnitude of the area he acquires, makes also the adjacent exterior so much the larger, and the stimulant to his covetousness so much the stronger. But such covetousness, "which is idolatry," will no more certainly destroy the rich man's soul, than the like greedy lust of territorial acquisition will destroy a republic's liberty.

We may not, in the case of our country, confine our view to the common evils flowing from national avarice or a lust for conquest. There are other things with us

which make a national passion for annexation specially hazardous. Whatever different opinions there may have been about the constitutionality of the purchase and annexation of Louisiana, a strong national interest urged towards that measure, particularly in securing the mouth of the Mississippi and free access to the Gulf of Mexico. And when the Floridas were obtained and annexed, universal patriotism might find its grounds of approbation. The Governments of France and Spain voluntarily ceded, the discordant population was comparatively inconsiderable, and the advantages universal to the country. But the next great accession of Texas, brought in many evils. The guilt of a war of great suffering and bloodshed rests upon the nation, and, from this, the further annexation of New Mexico and California; greatly augmented jealousy, acerbity, and sectional animosity, have been created by it; and while the public conscience has been made less sensitive to injustice, the popular appetite has been sharpened for spoil and conquest; and that high national character for honesty and integrity, which would give weight to our reproof of European plunder and rapine, has been lost.

Besides, such is the condition of all outlying territory now, that the interests of annexation are determined almost solely by the interests of slavery. Cuba and Hayti, and the neighboring states of Mexico, and even the distant Sandwich Islands, are all viewed through this medium, and are coveted or rejected according to their supposed bearing upon this institution, the most dangerous of all others to our Union. None of these countries could be annexed without bringing in a large population, unfitted by race and habit, education and religion, from very soon and safely participating in the franchises of our government. We cannot, in our

present condition, make another stride in annexation without fearfully augmenting our most imminent and threatening dangers.

And yet, who does not see that our national progress, as the spirit and ambition of the country is, will push these questions upon us, both from the South and the North, in only a few years more of our prosperity; and if sectional and party interests are to mingle in the strife, and add their perils to the trial, what man, wisely on the lookout, does not foresee dangers from which nothing but God can save us?

But, we say again, let the Gospel be everywhere preached and prevail; through this let party spirit and sectional interest be lost in enlarged patriotism and benevolence, and let ambition and avarice give place to righteousness, and the nation will patiently wait until the providence of God has ripened events for wise decision and safe action; and thus a few years will do that beneficially for all, which an earlier rashness and violence would have made everywhere disastrous. This Gospel only can hold the nation steady till the time comes; this only carry us steady through the destiny which opens upon us; and this only assimilate and incorporate in us that which the tide of providential events is steadily bringing to us. I have no more hope that our republic will pass this coming crisis safely without a wide diffusion of the christian spirit, than I have that we can drive camels through the eyes of needles.

5. *The selfishness of Party.*—There is always occasion for different opinions upon important measures, and in reference to broad political principles, even among the most wise and patriotic; and such differences of opinion may induce and perpetuate, for a long time, opposite po-

litical parties. Each side may fully express and strenuously advocate their own principles and measures, and strive to carry an election in favor of its own candidate at the polls. Such parties contending earnestly for sincerely adopted principles, will not be likely to work any mischief in the State. They are the natural result of free opinion, and quite incidental to the working of all intelligent free governments, and, in their wholesome and legitimate counterworking, will tend to the conservation of popular liberty rather than endanger it. Like the composition of forces in mechanics, a balanced movement and a determined progress may thus be attained, which single powers could not accomplish.

But political partizanship has manifestly removed itself very much from the ground of steadfast principle to that of personal interest. The party is not so much for the expression of opinion, as for the constraining and coercing it. It keeps itself together by studied tactics and coercive drill, and manufactures principles and platforms to suit the exigency, and proscribes and denounces all bolters. The real freeman cannot permit himself to belong to any modern political party, without sacrificing personal liberty for party trammels.

Legitimate party action, in the free combination of numbers under honestly adopted opposing opinions, is now scarcely known in the land. The maxim has become as practically prevalent in politics as in war, that "to the victors belong the spoils;" and as the national power and wealth increases, these spoils become the more tempting and their distribution the more corrupting. The emoluments of office control the entire canvass, and the selfishness of the office-seeker drives the public elections to violence and riot. He calculates the economy of so much time and money spent on the election over against the salary and the perquisites, and goes deliber-

ately at work, as if the sacred suffrages of freemen were only things of barter in the market. Even the farmer from his plough, and the artisan from his shop, begin to say, "We cannot afford to lose our day at the polls for nothing;" and they put their votes in the ballot-box for that party which has paid them the most for it.

When the popular current sets so strongly in such a direction, and is drawing into it the very heart and life of the state in its working population, where have we any safe-guards for freedom? What human arm is about to arrest this venality and profligacy, and save to posterity our free institutions? The purifying influence of the Gospel, and the general prevalence of genuine revivals of religion, can do it; but beside this nothing can. Make men truly pious, and you will make them watchful and consistent freemen. Growing temptation in growing national prosperity will, of itself, make party politics more corrupt and unscrupulous; but fill the land with bibles and churches and pastors, and it is at once bringing in God's method for saving the nation.

6. *Home Missionary Sectarianism.*—I put this last, because I think there may be seen in it some of the most serious indications of danger. Should sectarianism be allowed to prevail extensively in Home Missionary operations, it must very much weaken, or perhaps break up, this most effective instrumentality for the nation's deliverance. If the many elements of ruin which national prosperity is setting loose among the people be left to work on to their natural issue, we have seen that they must end in national destruction. God has provided for himself but one way to turn the current and arrest the disastrous result; and that is by the diffusion of gospel truth, which it is the direct design of Home Missions to

accomplish. How like the malicious subtilty of the arch-enemy will it be, if we should see his last masterstroke of policy to be the destruction of the most effective instrumentality for spreading the Gospel, just then when the national prosperity is most thickening its dangers around us! How bitter his taunt and scorn if he can blind Christians to the end he seeks, by their denominational sympathies and sectarian prejudices!

Through great national prosperity our wide territory is rapidly filling up with an active, enterprising population. In addition to our native increase, there comes in annually nearly half a million of foreigners. The aggressive movements of the Church upon these western new settlements have been most eminently successful. New churches have been formed; the ordinances of the Gospel established; precious revival seasons have occurred; family altars have been erected; and all the discordant elements of a new settlement have been wrought into the order, harmony and piety of a christian society. All this has been done best where there has been the least manifestation of sectarian interest and zeal. The closest union of effort and prayer has hitherto had the most signal success. But this great success of our united operation becomes the occasion of a new danger. Prosperity in the Church is now speaking out the same warnings as in the nation. Alas! if it must prove true, that the Church of God cannot bear prosperity any better than the state, and that the piety of the age is not pure enough to carry out her plans of union!

The great evangelical divisions of the Church are at work in the same field, and preaching substantially the same Gospel. Each has its eye very much directed and intent upon its own denominational enlargement; and in this attitude it is very liable not to see, that a course of policy seemingly wise for the sect may yet be very un-

wise for the Church catholic. The general cause may be much hindered, by that which is for a time rapidly building up a particular denomination. This makes it incumbent upon all evangelical denominations to be jealous and fearful of their own spirit, lest it be working injury to the grand cause of Christ, which is common to all. No denomination may so work for itself as to overlook the higher interests of their common Christianity.

But more especially is this incumbent upon those kindred and active denominations who from the first have labored together in the cause of Home Missions, and have collected and expended their charities through one organization. In the fullness of their general success, sectarian zeal has recently become greatly excited; and both have manifestly begun to calculate their own separate gains, and to be jealous of rival interests, and are thus very likely to look with prejudice upon measures really best for the whole, because they are thought not to be so directly subservient to the wants and wishes of the particular denomination. The minds of many good men have very decidedly assumed this position; and some of our best and ablest brethren both east and west, are already acting towards each other under such alienating influences. This spirit has not yet very extensively diffused itself through the churches, and it may perhaps be hoped that their steady piety and fraternal unity will at length resist and check its onward progress; but the action of public ecclesiastical bodies, and the opening of the discussion in our weekly papers and quarterly reviews, is doing what it may to call out any dormant prejudices, and latent antipathies. The current of denominational feeling is already rapidly drifting many brethren apart; and a little broader stream and further progress, and we can

work in the same cause through the same organ no longer. If we stand side by side any more, it will be because the same field, and not the old, kindred sympathy, brings us together.

And here, Brethren, I will make no unkind imputations; but, loud as my voice may utter, I would sound the word of caution. Such a rupture of fraternal bonds, and determined future distinctive action, will not leave either denomination any more harmonious or homogeneous. On the one side, there will still remain invincible and active repugnances to strict and stringent ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and on the other, there will come the occasion for a more fierce and bitter doctrinal contention. While neither will probably have gained very much in denominational efficiency, and nothing in ecclesiastical harmony; very much will have been lost in the progress of a common Christianity to save our own nation, and to evangelize the world. The violent sundering of ecclesiastical ties has already done too much evil for this generation; and there should not now be added the action of a sectarian zeal, which will greatly paralyze, if not effectually break down, the most effective voluntary organizations which the world has ever known for her conversion to Christianity.

Strenuously would I urge, that in the pressing duty of church extension by each denomination, there be carefully excluded the uncalled for zeal of sectarian prejudices and partialities. Our separate interests, at the most, are trifling, and really sink to nothing when held in comparison with the universal triumph of the general cause. No advantages to either should have any force in shaping measures, if they do not directly bear upon the complete evangelization of the entire country. A tried organization has been long and most successfully prosecuting the work of Home Missions; and it is now

of far less moment that either denomination operating through it should advance its own church order, than that both together should still hold on united, and thereby most successfully and rapidly convert the nation and the world to God. The perpetuation of such joint action, and the steady example of such liberal and benevolent operations, will do more honor to Christianity than any zeal which both may show in rival competition. It is far more like the spirit of the apostolic age. Most thorough is my conviction, whether the *fact* shall prove to be such or not, that the *obligation* upon both of these denominations, from patriotism and Christianity, now is, that they magnanimously bend sectarian interests to harmonious coöperation, and not push them out to fraternal disruption.

I conclude, by emphatically urging a preached Gospel as the effective and the only cure for all our dangers. I have only alluded to this, in connection with the national dangers I have specified, as the one medium instituted by God, through which it is possible for him to save rich men and prosperous nations. There never was a people to whom this truth so manifestly applied, as to us; for there has never been a government so dependent upon that political integrity which the Gospel inspires, as our own; nor has there ever been a government, which so invites and encourages the friends of the Gospel to establish its ordinances everywhere, as ours. America, with its present millions, and its unborn hundreds of millions, cannot be saved without the Gospel; but eminently, above all people the world has yet known, Americans can be saved by the Gospel. Where such aland, since the Savior's commission and ascension for "the word of the Lord to have free course and be

glorified," as ours! Such an ancestry; such an education and training in national habits from the first, as to make the house of God, the Bible and the preacher, as much a want as the hall of legislation, the statute book, and the justice of the peace. The institution of the Sabbath, though in many places most sadly desecrated, yet still acknowledged and giving to the evangelist, through all our newly settled territory, the opportunity of gathering the people to worship God, who have already given up for that day the secular business of the world. Not a rapidly rising village or city of the West so preöccupied by irreligion and infidelity, but the preacher of the Gospel may go and take up his abode among them; and so soon as the faithful labor begins, the blessing of the Holy Spirit may be expected, and revival seasons are enjoyed, the vicious reclaimed, and the ordinances of religion become established. These are the common, the regularly anticipated results, of stated prayer and faithful preaching of the word, all through the land. What has been, evinces plainly enough what can be done. The church of God can thus spread her power over all the country, and perpetuate her saving influence through coming generations. So can we, under God, save this nation; and in saving the American church and nation, there is ultimately secured the salvation of the world.

Let us thus unitedly and courageously prosecute this work. Let us give to this nobly proved Society, whose anniversary brings us now together, a more prompt and liberal support. When the seventh angel shall sound his trumpet and say, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever," I anticipate that America will be among the most conspicuous of those

saved nations of the Lord; and I as confidently anticipate that our American Home Missionary Society will, that day, be known and honored as one of God's most conspicuous instrumentalities in effecting so blessed a consummation. AMEN!

American Home Missionary Society.

The object of this Society is to assist congregations that are unable to support the gospel ministry, and to send the Gospel to the destitute. It seeks and sends forth missionaries; by counsel and pecuniary aid, it encourages the people to help themselves; strengthens feeble churches, gathers new ones, settles pastors, and thus renders *permanent* the institutions of the Gospel.

The Society was organized in 1826, by delegates from the Presbyterian, Congregational, Associate Reformed, and Reformed Dutch denominations, and had then in its service 169 missionaries. The sixth year, the number of missionaries was 509; the twelfth, 684; the eighteenth, 907; the twenty seventh, 1,087. The first year's expenditures were $13,984 17; the sixth, $52,808 39; the twelfth, $85,066 26; the eighteenth, $104,276 47; the twenty seventh, $174,439 24. The total of receipts for the twenty seven years, is $2,537,154 64; the total of years of labor, 14,836; the whole number of additions to the churches, 120,680.

During the twenty seven years since the organization of this Society, the Gospel has been preached by its missionaries at not less than *four thousand* stations; and not far from *nine hundred* churches, which had been gathered or nurtured through its instrumentality, have passed from the list of beneficiaries, and are now supporting their own gospel institutions; and not a few of these are among the strongest and most influential churches in the land. They are to be found in the chief places of social and commercial power—on the lines of our canals and lakes and rivers—along all our great thoroughfares of commerce and travel—at almost every gateway into the distant interior.

The *twenty seventh* year of its operations is briefly noticed in the following abstract from the last Annual Report, presented May 11th, 1853:

SUMMARY OF RESULTS.

The Society has had in its service the last year, 1,087 ministers of the Gospel, in twenty seven different States and Territories: in the New England States, 313; the Middle States, 215; the Southern States, 12; and the Western States and Territories, 547.

Of these, 584 have been the *pastors* or *stated supplies* of single congregations; 288 have ministered to two or three congregations each; and 215 have extended their labors over still wider fields.

Ten missionaries have preached to congregations of *colored* people; and 71 in foreign languages—17 to *Welsh*, and 46 to *German* congregations; and others to congregations of *Norwegians*, *Swedes*, *Swiss*, *Hollanders* and *Frenchmen*.

The *number of congregations and missionary stations* supplied, in whole or in part, is 2,160.

The *aggregate of ministerial labor* performed, is equal to 878 years.

The number of *pupils in Sabbath Schools*, is 72,500.

There have been added to the churches, 6,079, viz. 3,362 on profession, and 2,717 by letter. *Fifty six* missionaries make mention in their reports of *revivals* of religion in their congregations; and 426 missionaries report 2,888 hopeful conversions.

Forty seven churches have been *organized* by the missionaries during the year; and 39, that had been dependent, have assumed the support of their own ministry.

Fifty four houses of worship have been *completed;* 50 *repaired;* and 66 others are in the *process of erection.*

Eighty nine young men, in connection with the missionary churches, are in preparation for the gospel ministry.

THE TREASURY.

Receipts.—$171,734 24.

Liabilities.—$185,184 01.

Payments.—$174,439 24—leaving $10,744 77 still due to missionaries, for labor performed; toward canceling which, there is a balance in the Treasury of $7,202 15.

PROGRESS.

The *receipts* exceed those of the preceding year, by $11,671 99; 22 *more missionaries* have been in commission; 16 *more years of ministerial labor* have been performed; 212 *more congregations* have been blessed with the preaching of the Gospel; and 6,000 more children instructed in *Sabbath Schools.* The large reinforcement sent out to the Society's missions on the Pacific coast constitutes, also, a grateful as it is a most important feature in the advances of the year. The work which the Society has undertaken in this field is one of peculiar difficulty, and involves much pecuniary expense; but if its claims are promptly and liberally met; if the fountains of influence which have been opened among these mountains are made pure; if the church, like the prophet at the streams of Jericho, shall go forth to the spring of the waters and cast the salt in there, the streams that will issue thence shall clothe those distant shores with moral verdure and beauty, and bear the ark of salvation to the perishing of other lands.

Officers of the Society.

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16.

THE TRULY CHRISTIAN PULPIT OUR STRONGEST NATIONAL DEFENSE.

A

DISCOURSE

IN BEHALF OF THE

American Home Missionary Society,

PREACHED IN THE CITIES OF NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN,

MAY, 1854.

BY

REV. HENRY SMITH, D. D.

PRESIDENT OF MARIETTA COLLEGE, OHIO.

NEW YORK:
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DISCOURSE.

2 KINGS II. 12.

And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!

The purport of this apostrophe is not to be mistaken. It is a spontaneous outburst of grief. It is a lament of almost lyric magnificence, pathos, and power. It is the language of intense, perhaps some may be inclined to add of oriental, panegyric. What, then, let us ask, was the character of the man whose departure from the earth thus stirred the depths of emotion and elicited these words of high, of almost rapturous eulogy? What had he done for his country, that he should be counted as her best earthly safeguard and protection—as the very chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof? Was he, as the language might possibly suggest, a military chieftain, whose heroism had led her armies to victory, or whose policy had drawn around her borders an impregnable cordon of defense? He was a man of peace. Was he, then, some new Moses—some Solon, or Lycurgus, or Numa Pompilius, who had renovated the constitution and purged the laws of the land? On the contrary, he found his people already in possession of a perfect political code; and, beyond the simple exposition of its principles, in this direction he attempted nothing. At least, then, he must have have been a philosopher. At least, he had constructed some new theory of the universe, of the world of matter or of mind. It was

some Shemitic Plato or Aristotle, some Diogenes or Zeno or Epicurus, the fame of whose Academy, or Lyceum, or Cynosarges, or Porch, or Garden, had made his country the very Mecca of the genius of the world. Nothing of all this. He was a man, not of speculation, but of fact. But what then; had the canvas been taught to breathe by the touch of his creative pencil? Had the marble been made to speak by the edge of his magic chisel? He was no artist. Was he, then, a poet, a writer, the product of whose pen had thrilled the heart of the nation? No. Was he the author of some happy invention? Had he given his country a system of internal improvement; some new facilities of locomotion? Had he pierced the land with canals? Had he bridged its streams, tunneled its mountains, stimulated its manufactures, quickened its commerce, opened new sources of mineral or agricultural wealth? Was it some oriental Watt, or Fulton, or Arkwright, or Smeaton, or Brunel, or Bakewell? He had no talents of this description. He traversed the land on foot, and crossed its streams by other aid than that of bridges. What, then, were his contributions to the well-being of his country? What did he construct? What did he produce? Temples? No. Dwellings? No. Clothing? No. Food? No. Alas! I fear that to the spirit which prompts such interrogatories we shall hardly be able to justify even his existence,—to prove the righteousness of his claim to tread the fruitful earth, or to share in the bounties which nature lavishes upon all her children. In the eyes of the whole race of mere physical producers, of mere buyers and sellers, of the mere builders of cities and dealers in stocks, I fear he will pass, if not for a human drone and moth, at least for the veriest cypher.

Brethren and friends, let me freely speak to you of the fundamental element in the character of Elijah the

Tishbite. Was he, then, a cypher? He was a prophet of the living God. He was a prophet, not simply because the curtain of the future was sometimes uplifted before him; not simply because the fire of heaven sometimes obeyed his summons and broke forth at his word; not simply because the clouds once gathered at his bidding and poured forth their precious contents upon the earth; not simply because the waters once shrunk from the stroke of his mantle and permitted him to tread dry-shod the depths of the Jordan. These things and things like these are the accidents of the office, sometimes needed, it may be, to accredit it,—not its essence, not its fundamental idea. Fundamentally and really, he was a prophet because he was a depositary of the word of Jehovah, and because he was authorized to proclaim that word in the ears of men. Fundamentally, then, he was a prophet in virtue of the very element which the christian ministry claims as its high and distinctive peculiarity. It was because, however obtained, he possessed the truth of God; because he was able to say, Thus saith the Lord; and because he was authorized by God himself to summon men to compare their acts with this immutable and eternal word, and to govern themselves by it. Not in genius, not in learning, not in power of words, not in productive skill—in truth, in no personal characteristic whatever—are we to seek a justification of the eulogistic lamentation of the text. We can find it alone in his official character as the legate of heaven, as the herald of eternal truth, as the commissioned ambassador of God to man. Unseduced by flattery, unterrified by menaces, the duties of this high function he steadfastly and faithfully discharged. As, now, there is no safety for the individual soul like the safety of holiness, of humble obedience to the word of God, so there is no national escutcheon beneath which an entire

people can sit with such fearless security, as that which bears, in characters large enough and bright enough to be read by the whole world, this legend: "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." Not less truly than nobly, therefore, did the prophet Elisha signalize the protective power of that virtue which emanates from the word of God, guarding a people as with the flaming swords of cherubim,—a force more potent than its armed hosts, a fortress more impregnable than its munitions of rocks,—when, as he stood gazing upon the chariot of fire and the horses of fire which bore his master from his head, and bereft his country of her strongest earthly safeguard and defense, he uttered this sublime lament, pregnant with a great thought: "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!"

In endeavoring to vindicate the claim of the American Home Missionary Society to a place in your warmest affections, I shall not attempt, beyond what has already been said, to justify the parallel between the labors of the prophets of Israel and the work of the christian ministry. In the points essential to my purpose it is sufficiently obvious, and will be readily conceded by a christian assembly. The God of Israel is our God. The proclamation of his word is as essential to our well-being as it was to that of his ancient people. The sentiment, therefore, fairly deducible from the text, which I will endeavor to illustrate, is this:

THE TRULY CHRISTIAN PULPIT IS OUR STRONGEST NATIONAL DEFENSE.

Many different lines of thought would terminate in this conclusion. But there are two elementary forces of the Gospel, two prime operations of christian truth, the one remedial, the other compensatory, closely connected

certainly, but capable, nevertheless, of distinct consideration, to which I will ask your attention. The one view regards the faith of Christ as the corrective of earthly evil, the other as the supplement of earthly good.

I remark then,—

I. We may find a justification of the sentiment in the power of the pulpit as a bulwark against widespread and destructive speculative and practical error.

The question between the truly christian pulpit and no pulpit whatever, between the truly christian prophet and no prophet at all, is not submitted to our decision. The question is between the true prophet and the false; between the pulpit dispensing the word of God, and the pulpit dispensing as his word the doctrine of devils. The propensity to worship is innate in the human mind. We are made by God religious beings. By a structural law of our nature we seek an object of religious support; we seek an object before which to burn the incense of the heart's adoration. The answer which the dying Hume put into the mouth of the grim ferryman of the Styx—to a plea for a further extension of his life that he might be permitted to see the result of his labors, in removing the superstitions of men—the answer, namely, that he could not be permitted to wait for this, for that it would not take place in many hundred years, had a deeper significancy than ever the profound skeptic himself imagined. It had a significancy reaching down to the profoundest depths of human nature, depths which the plummet of that philosopher had not sounded; and human superstition, in the sense which he attached to the term, we may be sure will be coënduring with the existence of our race. On every side the human spirit puts forth the tendrils which proclaim its destiny,—which declare it to possess no self-sustaining power. As

the vine is supplemented by the oak, so the human spirit demands a God. Supply this demand with the knowledge of the true and living God, and it climbs upon the great idea upward to heaven. But neglect to supply it, and what then? Have you altered the nature of the subject? Have you reconstructed its powers? Have you abrogated and erased its inborn proclivities? Neglect to supply it, and it is human nature still. Neglect to supply it, and, prone upon the earth, it will cast its coils and tendrils about the things of the earth, and fancy it has found in these its deity. If it can find nothing nobler, nothing more eminent, it will say to a stock, thou art my father, and to a stone, thou hast brought me forth. The very tendrils designed to sustain it in mounting skyward, chain it to the dust. And if the human spirit unperverted demands a God, much more, blinded and fallen, does it demand the prophet. In the darkness of nature, it seeks for supernatural light, and it hails with joy its herald. See in this ardent suspiration after divine illumination the possibility of success to the vagaries of unbaptized philosophies; to bold and blasphemous pretensions to new revelations from heaven; yea, to the crude and shallow impostures of spiritual mountebanks and knaves. It is not now, and it never has been, the judgment of mankind that the prophet, the alleged exponent of the supernatural and divine relations of our being, is a mere pensioner upon the bounty of the world; that he is a mere consumer and moth and cypher. On the contrary, the exclamation of Elisha upon the rapture and translation of his master, is one of those remarkable utterances which condense into a single sentence an experience of all time and a conviction of the whole race. It is not simple Elisha who speaks to us, uttering a sentiment of the son of Shaphat. It is not a prophet, kindling with

inspiration as he catches the mantle of his ascending master. It is not a Jew, nor an Asiatic, nor an ancient even. Far rather is it a representative of the race, speaking in the name of mankind, and uttering in our ears one of the most earnest and universal convictions of humanity. As a historic character, the prophet appears everywhere a conspicuous, perhaps the most conspicuous personage upon the theater of human affairs. He exists because human nature exists. The principle which demands his intervention may be perverted, but it is a principle of human nature nevertheless. The prophet, therefore, though he may be decried, can never be discredited. He may be persecuted, but he can never be destroyed. He is indestructible, because the element of the human soul to which he gives expression is indestructible. The human mind has always and everywhere demanded the prophet,—some internuncius between the worshiper and his deity,—some authorized expounder of the will of Heaven. We may recognize this demand in the religious character of the Scripture patriarchs, in the sacred tribe of the Jewish economy, in the commissioned heralds of the christian dispensation. We may recognize it in the magi of the religion of Zoroaster, in the imams of Islamism, in the manifold priestly orders of organized heathendom, in the medicine-men of our own Indian tribes, and even in the wizards and sacrificers of Fetichism itself. Search where we will in history, go where we will upon the earth's surface, and, unless our own country be an exception, we shall see the prophet,—I say not now whether the true or the false,—occupying a position in the social body, and wielding an influence over its development, sufficiently significant of the fact that the office which he bears is the outward expression of an element of our nature which utterly

refuses to be overlooked, which utterly refuses to acquiesce in any form of social organization in which its claims shall be discarded or undervalued. The very exaggeration and extravagance of the principle which has too often inclined men to array the prophet in the purple of worldly grandeur, and to arm him with the thunderbolts of earthly power, is proof enough of its vital energy, and of the prodigious force with which it has acted upon the structure and form of human society. And let us ask, is our own country an exception? Has human nature changed because it has found at length a spot of earth on which the clear, calm sky of freedom bends over it its genial arch—because at length, it is treading a soil where it may hope for an untrammeled and perfect development? We are trying, in this country, a novel experiment. We have cast the prophet, as such, out of our civil organization. We have silenced his voice in the cabinet, on the bench, and in the halls of legislation. By sufferance, it is true, he may utter a brief prayer or pronounce an occasional discourse in the presence of the rulers of the land; but it is by sufferance merely. He is regarded as no integral, no necessary part in the mechanism of the state. The prophetic character, as such, is altogether ignored; and the prophet cut off from all civil provision for his support, is to be sustained entirely, if sustained at all, by the free-will offerings of those who value his ministrations. Not by the wise indeed, not by the far-sighted most certainly, not by statesmen who comprehended the elements of human nature, nor by citizens who understood the conditions of social well-being, was the function of the true prophet, as an organizing and conservative power in the state, thereby intended to be denied or depreciated. The experiment had its sufficient reasons, but it was an experiment still; and it would be folly to

deny that as an experiment it had also its hazards. One obvious hazard was, that the superficial thinkers, the gay and the pleasure-loving multitude, the thoughtless millions who float carelessly upon the stream of society, seeing the prophetic office thus unrecognized in the constitution of a government regarded by them the noblest product of human wisdom, would consider it as an effete superstition, not only not to be supported, but deserving their supreme contempt. Another was that, cast upon the sympathies of his flock, the services of the pastor would be regarded, even by christian communities themselves, as a private luxury rather than a public necessity; his support as a private charity instead of a sacred, public obligation; and that high-minded and conscientious men would refuse to assume an office in which, being regarded by others—when accepting as a return of service performed, the simplest necessaries of life—as the recipients of a charity, they might incur the risk of regarding themselves in the same light, and encounter the temptation to prostitute its sacred functions for a piece of bread. These hazards of the experiment are so obvious, that we can hardly consider it strange that to those trained under a different system, it should appear an impossibility for the integrity of christian truth to survive it; that seventy years ago Paley should have presented these as its necessary results; that, more recently, Chalmers should have shrunk from making it; and that Alison should record it as a historic fact that its consequences have been disastrous to religion in the American States.

With some emphasis, no doubt, we shall pronounce this historic record a fable; and a fable it doubtless is. With some impatience and contempt, we may perhaps also pronounce the experiment triumphant, and the problem of our national evangelization solved. But let

us ask, in all truth and soberness, is it solved? Has the pure Gospel leavened the whole mass of mind, even in the comparatively homogeneous communities of the eastern States? And what, then, are we to say of the heterogeneous and unassimilated communities of the West? What is the answer of the census of 1850? Can we persuade ourselves, when it reports church accommodations, including every denomination which calls itself christian, and of every description of edifice which can shelter from the weather, for fourteen millions of souls, that we therefore have fourteen millions of church-going people, and that the remaining nine millions are composed of those whom infancy or sickness incapacitate for attendance upon the services of the sanctuary? Would it not be a fairer conclusion, to say that in 1850 we had nine millions of people totally unprovided with the Gospel, whether pure or corrupt? What say the half million of immigrants annually added to our population, and for the most part going to swell the statistics of destitution? Is it any wonder that of these nine millions of souls, thus withdrawn from all the high stimulants of the Gospel, the same census should report one million, not of our mixed population, but of free adults, who can neither read nor write? And in this state of facts, can we wonder at any of the alarming phenomena, whether spiritual or political, which the briefest out-look upon the nation presents? Five and twenty years since, who would have deemed it possible that an arrant and ignorant impostor, then just commencing his career—with a fanciful tale written as an amusement by a valetudinarian clergyman, for his Bible, with a series of transparent falsehoods and fictitious miracles for his instruments—could succeed in founding a community of religious fanatics upon American soil, sufficiently numerous to carve a State out of our national

domain, and to demand admission into the Union,—a commonwealth of polygamists? Can we wonder, in the state of religious knowledge which these facts of the census imply, that Millerism and Mesmerism and Socialism and Biology and Spiritualism, should send forth their apostles of delusion and folly, and that they should succeed in carrying captive silly women to the madhouse, yea, and in making dupes of men who consider themselves far too wise to be duped by the ambassadors of the cross of Christ?

Let us not inquire how many of the nominally Protestant sects possess little of Christianity but its name. Let us not inquire what the high priests of Transcendentalism would do for the well-being of the country, and the stability of its institutions, could they succeed in persuading us that we may be inspired, as well as the apostles, and that the religion of reason is better than "innumerable Christianities;" could they succeed in so far clearing our spiritual vision as to enable our whole population to adopt the language of the great modern founder of Rationalism, in his Critic of Pure Reason, "Certainly no one is able to boast that he knows there is a God or a future life; for if he knows this, he is then exactly the man I have long sought after;"—or could they succeed in so disciplining our faith and opening the eyes of our spirits, as to enable us all to re-echo the language of the same philosopher, who, when asked, in view of death, what he promised himself for the future, true to the affirmations of his speculative, though false, it may be, to the concessions of his practical reason, replied—"nothing certain;" and again—"I have no conception of a future life." Yet these are the men who would fain persuade us that they are the people, and wisdom shall die with them,—that they have reached a point of vision which enables them perfectly to discrim-

inate the true from the false in the "book-revelation" of Christianity. And high above the din and tumult of this battle of free, however perverted, mind, elate and conspicuous, throned upon her dogma of infallibility, behold the "Scarlet Lady," offering to our citizens a safe asylum and a grateful rest—an asylum from the perplexities of conscience, a rest from the toils of investigation and of thought. The infallible church, can she not keep the conscience of her followers? Does she not know how they ought to think, and feel, and act, and vote? Behold her, disciplining two millions of our countrymen, and kindly offering to discipline them all for the high duties and solemn responsibilities of American citizenship.

These are some of the prophets of error, who like the priests of Baal, in the time of Elijah, are seducing the hearts of the people from the God of the Bible, the God of the fathers and founders of this republic, and urging them to burn the incense of worship before their several deities. The Church, Reason, Our Country, Manifest Destiny, Progress, Mammon—these are the idols to which they are teaching us to bow down. No, my brethren, the problem of American evangelization is not yet solved; and there is but one way in which to solve it. The friends of evangelical Christianity must go up to a higher platform of self-consecration and labor. They must feel more deeply the solemn responsibilities which the providence of God has laid upon them; their hearts must burn with more intense desires to fulfill the high and glorious mission to which they have been set apart and consecrated by God. And let us not be discouraged by the magnitude of the work. Let us not be terrified by the fierceness and the number of our foes. We have an Almighty Helper. Our weapons are of etherial temper. Error is strong, indeed,

but truth is stronger. The word of the Lord is tried, and endureth forever. It is equal to every exigency. We want no new revelations, whether of fanaticism, of mysticism, or of reason. We want only the sword of the Spirit, wielded by strong and skillful hands, by workmen who need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. These workmen we must have. We must have them freely trained, and freely sustained by the people of God. We must have them in numbers sufficient to bring the great principles of christian truth which gave birth to the nation, into direct contact with the mind and heart of the nation, and the republic is safe. These principles can perpetuate our institutions; they can neutralize the poison of error; they can allay the rancors of party; they can curb the lust of dominion, the unscrupulous spirit of national ambition; they can avert from us, and they alone, the terrors of an awful catastrophe, which every year grows more imminent; for the high humanities of the Gospel alone can discharge with safety the angry contents of that dark and threatening cloud, which, in the better days of the republic, hung, thin and fleecy, along our southern horizon; but which now, rolling in black and terrific masses, upward to the zenith, and around the whole concave of heaven, makes distinctly audible its muttering thunders, and threatens ere long to pour upon the land the complicated and indescribable horrors of a civil and a servile war.

II. The truth of the sentiment derived from the text may be illustrated by looking at the christian prophet as the holder forth, before the mind of man, of the great and the true ideal of life.

It is remarked in substance by a writer, whose language I will not quote, but whose true and wise obser-

vations, like diamonds set in jet, are all the more striking, for the back-ground of falsehood and folly with which they are too often contrasted, that the men who live in the hearts and in the memory of mankind, are not the contributors to the wants and passions of their physical natures. The monarchs of the mind—these are the demi-gods of the race—the poets whose vivid pictures glow in the chambers of our fancy—the philosophers whose ideas stimulate our intellects—the moralists whose high distinctions lift us upward from the low sphere of sense, from houses and lands, from food and money, into the clearer and calmer and purer region of truth and duty. Coincident with this observation, is the equally striking remark of Locke: "Temples," says he, "have their sacred images, and we see what influence they always have over a great part of mankind. But, in truth, the ideas and images in men's minds are the invisible powers which govern them, and to these they all universally pay a ready submission." Men are not satisfied with the present. The whole creation groans and travails together in pain, looking for the realization of its ideal. The natural passions, permitted to gain the ascendancy, carve out, each one for itself, a distinct and vivid ideal of life. Wealth, power, fame, pleasure, all have their prophets, who address, not the senses simply, but the spirit also; prophets who sing their syren song in the ears of the spirit, and who present to the eye of the spirit golden glories, woven of the stuff which dreams are made of. We tread a spiritual earth. We look upward to spiritual heavens. A poor youth from the country visits for the first time this great metropolis of yours. He wanders through its streets and avenues. Its palatial splendor dazzles his senses. He asks who are the possessors of these magnificent abodes, and learns that many of them were the framers of their own fortunes.

A new ideal of life is born. Suddenly a bright light shoots up to the zenith of his spiritual firmament, and burns there, before the eye of his fancy, a vision of wealth. This vision, like its kindred visions of pleasure and glory, is brilliant, indeed, but it is liable to sudden extinction. Its sphere is the lower atmosphere of the soul, the region of clouds and vapors; and its longest continuance is the term of our terrestrial life. Its prophets, therefore, though they may charm and attract, can never gain a lasting place in the memory of mankind.

But there is a higher region in the spirit of man, a region in which revolve the orbs of a nobler ideal of life—sympathy with the joys and sorrows of our fellow-tenants of the dust, a benevolent regard for the earthly well-being of our fellow-men, family affection, patriotism, philanthropy. How pure and lovely, often, are these planets of the soul! But they are planets still. Their circuits may be wide and noble, but they revolve never the less about the temporal and the finite. Their prophets, therefore, though they may win the esteem of mankind, can never enthrone themselves in the inner heart of humanity. Lift up thine eyes once more, O child of earth and of heaven! There is a loftier region still within the compass of thy spiritual vision. Behold the objects which insphere themselves in these upper heavens,—eternal truth, eternal right, eternal justice, divine and eternal love! Here dwells the idea of absolute moral rectitude. Here dwells the idea of perfect holiness. Here dwells the sentiment of duty. Far above the meteors of wealth and fame and pleasure, which gleam amid the clouds and storms of personal interest and personal passion; infinitely beyond even these lesser and planetary lights of life, at which we have just been gazing; from afar, in the deep empyrean of the soul, they look down, with a calm and stellar

brightness, upon our evil world, the fixed stars of the human spirit. Here we may pause and worship, for this the dwelling place of our God. Little now does he understand the wants and capacities of his own spirit, who attempts to form an ideal of life from which these great conceptions shall be excluded. He will make miserable shipwreck of his happiness. Little does he understand the spiritual forces which agitate most profoundly the heart of humanity, who looks for them in personal interest and personal passion. Small competency, moreover, has he to read aright the lessons of history, or to construct institutions for moulding and governing society, who has failed to learn that the human soul knows no sublimity of purpose, no energy of action, no enthusiasm of enterprise, no stubbornness of resistance like those which are kindled and fed at these supernal fires. For this reason, doubtless, have the functions of the prophet so often been superadded to those of the legislator and the warrior. All along the beaten highways of history, wherever great enterprises have been achieved, wherever great obstacles have been successfully encountered, behold the prophet! Behold him in the very van of progress, bearing aloft in his hands the symbols of the supernatural and the divine, his eye flashing a mystic light, and his voice thrilling the multitudes with those mysterious and solemn tones, which like the far echoes of the Alps seem to speak to them from the skies. Examine, if you will, the motive forces which are heaving the nations and agitating the world to-day. The revolution of China is religious, and Tien-te, proclaiming himself a prophet of the Highest, marshals the Celestials to his standard, and leads them to victory in the name of the Almighty. And, whatever may be true of the autocrat of Russia himself, "the drum-beat" of Nicholas, now reverberat-

ing from the Euxine to the Arctic sea—every stroke of which realizes the magic power of the drum-stick of the Shawnee prophet of the Wabash, and in reality, as did that in imagination, "shakes the world,"—falls upon the ears of his people, at least, as a call of God. "The holy places of our religion;" this is the legend of his banners. Assert now, if you please, that this is all midsummer madness, superstition, and fanaticism. It is human nature nevertheless; and remember, I pray you, that in dealing with men, you are dealing with human nature. But it is not *all* fanaticism. It is not all superstition. It has a basis, at least, of truth and soberness. God has not given us a religious nature capable of such stupendous perversions, and with no legitimate development. There is a genuine religion. There is a true prophet. That religion we believe to be found in the "book-revelation" of Christianity. And that prophet, behold him, with the word of God unbound, with the open Bible, grounding his commission on the Scriptures of truth, and making the decisions of that sacred volume, well understood, his final appeal! This is the true prophet of God; and he is as well the prophet of liberty, of popular rights, of emancipated mind. England knows it. Scotland knows it full well. Germany knows it. America knows it. Men may affect to think lightly of the influence of the Christian prophet; of the organizing and conservative power of the Protestant ministry in a state. The heart of the Anglo-Saxon race, from its inmost core, confesses it, and glories in it. Save only the soil trodden by the feet of the divine Redeemer of men, there are no spots of earth dearer to memory or to fame, than those which are hallowed by their association with the names of the prophets of religious liberty. Think of Luther. The "Stamm-haus" at Möhra, the birth house at Eisleben, the little chamber

in the Wartburg, looking out upon its mountain chasms and its sea of firs, the dwelling in Wittenberg, the town church where he preached, the castle church to whose door he nailed his immortal theses, and beneath whose floor, side by side with those of his beloved Philip, his sacred ashes now repose,—these are the true Meccas of Saxon, and of Anglo-Saxon Christendom. Think of the Reformer of Switzerland. The name of that man is uppermost in the thoughts of every true-hearted pilgrim to the shores of the Leman. As he approaches Geneva, he forgets that Lausanne and Ferney and Coppet have even an existence. The Gibbons, the Voltaires, and the De Staëls vanish from his thoughts. Calvin is the Mont-Blanc of his memory. And as he stands upon the little island that parts "the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,"—Calvin still the theme of his meditations,—forgetting for the moment the modest request of the great reformer, he feels his heart swell with indignation and his cheek glow with shame at the degeneracy of a people who could erect the bronze statue which adorns it, to the memory of the visionary, the infidel, the immoral Rousseau, and leave the prince of theologians without a monument. So has not Wittenberg treated Luther. So has not Rotterdam treated Erasmus.

There is another point on the continent of Europe, little known to transatlantic fame, but dear and even precious to the American heart. You will not find its name in the road books. Kings and nobles, monarchists and prelatists would pass it by in contempt, if not in ignorance; but it draws like a moral loadstone the heart of every American who approaches it. Come with me, my brethren, and let us look for a moment upon that hallowed spot. An hour's ride from a great commercial city of northern Europe, beneath a canopy of grand old trees, will bring us to an ancient village, whose low-browed,

red-roofed houses, and narrow, winding streets promise small gratification to the pilgrim of the beautiful; but we are pilgrims of the heart. Let us persevere. Let us thread these uneven and tortuous streets, till we have penetrated the village. Well then, we have reached our destination, let us alight. What do we behold? Little, it is true, to gratify the eye of an artist. We are in an open area. On our left rises the tower of an ancient church, whose walls have been furrowed and embrowned by the lapse of centuries. On the right is a broad haven, the termination of a canal, which here forms a junction with a stream navigable for sea-going vessels. At a little distance before us creep the sluggish waters of the Meuse. Here is little indeed of æsthetic value for the eye of the body. But as the historic scene rises and pictures itself before the eye of the spirit, we can hardly help exclaiming aloud in our enthusiasm, This is Delft-haven! At yonder shore was moored the Speedwell, the destined consort of the Mayflower. Here transpired a scene immortal in the annals of the church of Jesus Christ; a scene surpassed in deep and tender interest only by the apostolic adieu to the church of Ephesus. We are standing, moreover, upon the theater of an occurrence which has marked forever a day in the calendar of a hemisphere. Here, escaped from the persecution of a bigot monarch, after twelve years of rest and refreshment, the little church of Leyden was gathered to bid adieu to the Pilgrims of New England. Here stood Brewster, and Bradford, and Carver, and Winslow, and Allerton, and Standish. Here knelt and prayed the hero-saint, the immortal Robinson. Here were uttered by him those lofty words, the spirit of which I pray God, may never cease to live in the churches of the New World:

"Brethren, we are now quickly to part from one

another, and whether I may ever live to see your faces any more, the God of heaven only knows. But, whether the Lord has appointed that or no, I charge you before God and his blessed angels, that you follow me no further than you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ. If God reveal any thing to you by any other instrument, be as ready to receive it, as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry; for I am verily persuaded the Lord has yet more truth to break forth out of his Holy Word. For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the Reformed Churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will at present go no further than the instruments of their Reformation. The Lutheran cannot be drawn beyond what Luther saw: whatever part of his good-will the Lord revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And the Calvinists you see stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things. This is a misery much to be lamented; for though they were burning and shining lights in their times, yet, they penetrated not the whole counsel of God, but, were they now living, would be as willing to embrace further light as that which they at first received. For it is not possible that the christian world should have come so lately out of thick anti-christian darkness, and that the perfection of knowledge should break forth at once."

Such was the spirit of Robinson, and such the spirit of the Pilgrims. After a night spent in prayer, the morning of the 22d of July, 1620, dawned upon the affectionate and sorrowing band. They knelt together in supplication for the last time upon yonder shore. Here for the last time their pastor commended them to the favor and benediction of Heaven. The final adieus were spoken. Amid sobbing and tears the Speedwell, laden with the destinies of a continent, dropped down the

stream, slowly receded from the eyes of the "faithful watchers" upon the shore, and lessening and fading as she advanced, at length sunk below the circle of the horizon.

> "What sought they thus afar?
> Bright jewels of the mine?
> The wealth of seas? the spoils of war?—
> They sought a faith's pure shrine."

That faith's "pure shrine" they found. It was erected by the hands of the christian prophet; after no pattern drawn from human imagination or of human reason, but after the pattern given in the true and living word of God. Behold, my brethren, the genesis of our nation! The true christian pulpit was the nucleus of our social *organization.* This was the organic center from which emanated, at the beginning, the germ of our national life. This was the power which leveled the unshorn forests of the New World. This was the power which planted the schools and reared the colleges of America. At this shrine our fathers worshiped. Here they were taught the great and the true ideal of human life; and they were inspired by it, too. Here they learned the greatness of meaning concentrated in the word, *man.* Here they learned the conditions of his full and perfect development. Here they learned the value of the life that now is, from its relations to that which is to come. Here they were taught to believe that the bow of immortality spans the cloud of death. With the glass of christian faith they pierced that black and awful firmament of night, impenetrable to mortal vision, which canopies the grave; and they beheld its outer surface belted and glowing with the splendors of a better world. They saw distinctly arching over it a concave of glory, luminous with the light of life eternal. Here they were taught the relations and the responsibility of every indi-

vidual soul to the Eternal Father of all men. They believed these things. They believed them, not upon the testimony of a stumbling and hesitating human reason, but upon the infallible authority of God's everlasting word. Here, therefore, they learned the magnitude and the limits of human rights. This shrine was the nurse of heroes. It was the nurse of heroes, because it was the nurse of individual men; men who knew their rights and knowing dared maintain them, at all hazards, and in the face of any earthly power. I do not claim that the christian pulpit had then or that it has yet, penetrated the "whole counsel of God," as revealed in his holy word. I do not claim that its expositions of that word were perfect; but I claim, nevertheless, that this was the fountain from which emanated, that it was the power which perpetuated from generation to generation, for the space of a hundred and fifty years, the intelligence and manly virtue which characterized the yeomanry of these States at the opening of the Revolution, that sterling independence of mind, that uncompromising and unconquerable love of civil liberty, which burst into a flame on Lexington green, and which spoke out in a voice of thunder from the heights of Bunker's hill. In the feeble beginnings of the American republic, when the life of our infant liberty was in peril, it was not thought beneath the dignity of the governing powers to invoke the aid of the pulpit. Then they earnestly sought its solemn sanctions for the cause of national liberty; then they earnestly invoked its solemn intercessions with God, and its lofty inspirations to kindle and to sustain the zeal of the people. Then they sought the presence of the christian pastor to guard the morals of the army, and to nerve our soldiers, by his thrilling appeals, for the terrible struggle. And are we now to learn that "ministers of the Gospel are unknown to this govern-

ment," and that "of all others they are the most encroaching, and as a body the most arrogant class of men"? Heaven forbid that this should be true! Heaven forbid that the American people should accept, as legitimate and deserved, an insult, not to the mission of the christian pastor merely, but to their own intelligence, which has thus far regarded the pulpit as the strongest and most venerated bulwark of republican liberty! Is this all a mistake? Is our whole past history a lie? Have those whom we have been wont to regard as the wisest and best and most patriotic of fathers, as the purest and truest and noblest of mothers, when they have brought their first-born sons to the altar of God, and, consecrating them to him, besought that he would accept the offering and count them worthy to be put into the holy ministry, been dreaming a dream of fanaticism and folly? Have they then only been swelling the army of traitors to their country, and to the happiness and welfare of mankind? If this be so, then in the name of humanity, in the name of liberty, in the name of our country, let us demolish the Protestant pulpit; let us silence the voice of the christian prophet; let us at last be free—yes, free! And now—what is to be the condition of the land? Come up hither to our council, ye prophets of liberty without the Bible; ye prophets of national prosperity and happiness without the pulpit of Protestant Christianity! We have broken down our altars. We have extinguished their fires. We have abandoned the sanctuaries of our fathers' God, and, like Ahab, have driven their prophets to the desert. Come hither, and turn over with us and for us the pages of the world's history. Tell us what condition of man, as written in that history, free from this ignominious and galling chain, shall we appropriate, and make the condition of our beloved land. Shall it be the prostrations and man worship, the fawning flattery

and cringing terror, which have marked the slaves of oriental despotism both in ancient times and in our own? Shall it be the stormy democracy of Greece, that meteor of liberty, fierce and brilliant, which shot athwart the heavens, which blazed and dazzled and exploded—and with it, remember, the despotism of a mob, the corruption of demagogues, the ostracism of justice, the goblets of hemlock, and, above all, the temples of Venus, the orgies of Bacchus, and the howlings of the Corybantes? Shall it be that brightest page in Roman story, which opens with the reeking dagger of Lucretia, and closes with the bloody tragedy of Phillippi—the days in which flourished the so-called stern republican virtue of the Eternal City, whose blaze broke forth under the burning breath of the first Brutus, and whose expiring embers were quenched in the blood of the second? Shall we accept of this—and with it, let us remember, of its patrician arrogance, its plebian servility, its domestic slavery, its agrarian madness, its tribunitial storms, its debasing superstitions, its unending factions, and its perpetual war? Shall we choose the condition of mediæval Christendom, that beautiful period during which the splendors of the miter eclipsed the light of the Bible, and when the whole civilized world was making hot haste to Gothic barbarism? Shall we accept the splendid trappings of the Papacy, its stupendous cathedrals, its pealing organs, its scarlet robes, its genuflexions and images, and incense, and host and unction—and with them, let us not forget, its chained Bible, its night of mind, its ecclesiastical despotism, its papal interdicts, its annals, its indulgences, its inquisitorial dungeons and its auto-da-fe? Or, finally, shall we rather choose the paradise of Atheism, those Elysian abodes of freedom from all moral obligations and all religious restraint, which swam before the delighted vision of Voltaire and D'Alembert,

of Diderot and Robespierre—those Hesperian fields of the blessed in which human nature, uncramped by the withering superstition of a God, was to gain its primeval dignity; was to sport itself with unwearied feet upon the verdant carpets of its native clime; was to "spread its broad wing to the sky, and gaze undazzled on the sun"? Beautiful speculation! Shall we adopt it? I care not now whether at the instance of the prophets of a sensual or a transcendental philosophy—shall we adopt it? Or shall we first read the commentary upon it which we find in the decimation of France, in the apotheosis of a courtesan as the goddess of reason, and in the whole history of the French Revolution?

O my countrymen! listen not, I beseech you, to the seductive counsels of the prophets of an irreligious liberty. They are the prophets of Baal. Well, indeed, at this juncture in our national history, may I re-echo in your ears the words of a true lover of his country, whose voice, in the days of its strength, at these high festivals of our religion, was wont to thrill our hearts like the voice of a trumpet, and whose feebler tones, thank God, have not yet uttered their dying testimony to the priceless value of the great truths of the Gospel of Christ: "The hand that overturns our altars is the hand of death, unbarring the gates of Pandemonium, and letting loose upon our land the crimes and the miseries of hell." Shall we, then, venture upon this fearful experiment? No, never. The God of our fathers shall be our God forever and ever. We will not overthrow the altars of the Protestant faith. We will not abandon them. Far rather will we re-erect those which have fallen down; far rather will we build them in all the waste and desert places of the land.

In conclusion, I desire to propose to the patrons and

friends of the American Home Missionary Society, the sober inquiry, whether we have fully appreciated the magnitude of the interests which are staked upon the successful prosecution of the work of giving to the whole body of our countrymen the pure doctrines of the Protestant faith. These doctrines, which produced our national liberties, constitute the only power on earth which is able to sustain and perpetuate them. These are able. But they possess no magic power. They must be inculcated by the voice of the living preacher. This is the ordinance of God, and it is as well the dictate of common sense. Complaint is made by the prophets of novel remedies for our social evils and our national sins, that the doctrines of our faith are not adequate to the exigencies of the case. It would be as just to complain that the sword does not slay whilst hidden in the scabbard; that the remedies for our physical diseases do not cure whilst lodged in the cases of the physician. The great doctrines of the Gospel must be preached. They must be carried by the ambassadors of God to every hamlet in the land. Is it quite certain that American Christians come up to the full measure of their responsibility to the Protestant faith, to their country, and their God, whilst their disbursements for the support of the gospel ministry, when compared with those of British Christians for the same object, are only in the ratio of one dollar to ten? Is it altogether strange that the faith of the young men in the church does not rise so much above the general level as to prevent them from shrinking from a service, the preparation for which and the prosecution of which they see to be one continued struggle with an almost abject poverty? Is it altogether strange that in this state of things the supplies for our Home Missionary work should be found constantly decreasing? No, my brethren. Three things, I am deeply

convinced, the churches which represent the faith of our fathers owe to the cause of Christ in our land, and not to the cause of Christ only, but to their own prosperity and to the protection of all the great and precious interests which stand connected with the preservation of our civil institutions. The first is, a more liberal provision for the education of the sons of the prophets. The second is, a more generous support to the laborers in our Home Missionary fields. For twenty years, I have witnessed the toils and struggles of Home Missionary life. I have slept beneath the humble roofs of our missionaries. I have eaten at their frugal boards. I have seen some of them entering upon their work in the morning of life, with hopeful hearts, and fainting before noon under burdens which they could not bear. I have seen men with cultivated and active minds, whose thirst for growth in knowledge they had no means to gratify. I have seen them surrounded and assailed by forms of error, the most intellectual, subtle, and destructive, which they had no means of investigating. I have seen them surrounded by children, whom they were not only unable to educate, but whose physical necessities were supplied only by the most humiliating sacrifices. I have seen a true-hearted daughter of the Pilgrims, a woman of education, of intellect, nay of genius, and of heroic faith, that she might aid her missionary husband to maintain his ground, superadding to the appropriate duties of the mother and the pastor's wife, the labors of manifold mechanic arts, whose products are indispensable in a family; and I have seen, as the issue, the hectic flush of consumption burning upon her cheek, and heard that hollow cough which is the fatal premonition of an early grave. I have seen our missionaries removing from post to post, leaving their labors unfinished, and therefore unproductive, in the hope of escaping from some portion of the

intolerable burdens which were crushing them. I have seen, as the result of these things, missionary churches remaining unfruitful, feeble, ready to perish. I have heard the contemptuous taunts of the enemies of our faith, which seemed to say of our missionary structures, as Tobiah the Ammonite said of the work of Nehemiah, "That which they build, if a fox go up, it shall even break down their stone wall." These things I have seen, and I have turned away from the spectacle in sorrow and in tears. O my brethren! the churches have not yet reached the high standard of effort and sacrifice which they expect of their missionaries; no, nor that which the exigencies of the nation demand, and without which, I fear, the whole fabric of our institutions will sink in ruin. As our contribution to the salvation of the land, the resources of this Society ought at once to be doubled. We ought to station a missionary wherever there is a community of souls, destitute of the pure Gospel, to be saved. And wherever we plant a missionary at all, we ought to sustain him, not only above the fear of physical want, but furnished with all the appliances needful to make his mission respected and effective, and to secure a permanent foothold for the faith which he preaches. And one thing more. We must not leave him even thus. It is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. We must give the missionary our sympathies. We must give him our hearts. Whenever we enter our closets, whenever we offer up our petitions in the sanctuary of our fathers, we must commend him and his work to the benediction of God; we must invoke for him the presence and power of that Divine and Almighty Spirit, in whose hand are the hearts of the people, and who can turn them as the rivers of water are turned. These are among the first and most solemn duties of American Christians. Beyond the sphere of mere per-

sonal labor for the cause of the Redeemer, they have no holier mission, no higher privilege, no work more pressing and imperative, than this. This work accomplished, and our glorious heritage of liberty is safe. This work accomplished, and our broad and beautiful land, more magnificent in the grandeur of its natural scenery, more attractive and beautiful as an abode of civilized man, than any other upon which the sun looks down, teeming with the rewards of christian labor, garlanded and gemmed with the products of christian art, is given to Christ and to freedom forever. Oh, methinks I can see it now, thus redeemed and thus consecrated. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, I can see it studded with a thousand times ten thousand true christian altars, from which a grateful people's incense of worship ascends to heaven. I can see reflected and repeated in the multiplied millions of its happy homes, that delightful picture, whose moral beauty and whose vital relations to national liberty the peasant-bard of Scotland well knew, at least, both how to appreciate and how to describe:

"The cheerful supper done, with serious face,
They round the ingle form a circle wide:
The sire turns o'er with patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-Bible, once his father's pride.
* * * * *

He wales a portion with judicious care,
And, let us worship God, he says with solemn air.

Then kneeling down to Heaven's eternal King,
The saint, the husband, and the father prays,
Hope springs triumphant on exulting wing,
That thus they all shall meet in better days."

O my country! such homes are the nurseries of thy truest defenders. Here are thy herosons, whose stalwart arms will maintain the flag of thy freedom "masthead high," when traitor hands would pluck it down. Here are the men who will bare their bosoms to thy foes, and—

——"Howe'er crowns and coronets are rent,"

will "stand a wall of fire," around the ark of thy liberties. Yea, more, here are thy true christian philanthropists, who shall plant the standard of that blessed cross, which has been thy salvation, upon every shore, and whose swelling voices shall form thy part in that sublime and universal anthem, in which every creature which is in heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, shall be heard saying: BLESSING, AND HONOR, AND GLORY, AND POWER, BE UNTO HIM THAT SITTETH UPON THE THRONE, AND UNTO THE LAMB, FOREVER!

11.

HOME MISSIONS: AS CONNECTED WITH CHRIST'S DOMINION.

A

DISCOURSE

IN BEHALF OF THE

American Home Missionary Society,

PREACHED IN THE CITIES OF NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN,

MAY, 1855.

BY

RICHARD S. STORRS, D. D.

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN BRAINTREE, MASS.

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DISCOURSE.

REVELATION, XIX: 12.

"And on his head were many crowns."

THE crown is an emblem of dignity and glory; also, of victory, and supreme authority. "Many crowns" denote an accumulation of honors, and a succession of victorious achievements.

Jesus wears them. "The Faithful and True" in righteousness doth judge, and make war. Clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and followed by the armies of heaven, he hath a name written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

When the Man of sorrows bowed his head on Calvary, though nature sublimely expressed her sympathies, and the tears of loved ones testified their affection, it was little understood, by friends or foes, that to the victim, bleeding at the point of the Roman spear, belonged the sovereignty of worlds. Soon afterwards, seen in vision by the beloved disciple, he has eyes as a flame of fire; many crowns are on his head; and a name is written that no man knoweth but himself, "The Word of God!" Wonderful transformation, of the babe that was cradled in the manger, and the sufferer who cried upon the cross, "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me!"

The Lord Jesus Christ has a wide and glorious Dominion. We may contemplate it in three aspects, viz.: its extent, his title to it, and the principles on which he exercises it.

I.—THE EXTENT OF HIS DOMINION.

1. It extends over the CHURCH.

Those redeemed by his blood, whether before his incarnation or after it, and whether on earth or in heaven, form a distinct and 'holy nation.' Each trembling penitent below, and each triumphant victor on Mount Zion, is alike the subject of his government, and the object of his tender care. Widely separated, and mutually unknown as they may be, diverse as are their circumstances, elevated their joys, or overwhelming their sorrows, yet the laws that bind them, the hopes that sustain them, and the rewards that await them, are common to all. They are one family, of which he is the Head; one nation, of which he is the Ruler; a world within worlds, of which he is Proprietor; and though thrown into numerous divisions, each distinguished by peculiarities of faith or of practice, they yet hold "one Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism." If through infirmity individuals contend, and churches divide, on questions of ritual observance and ministerial authority, all yet harmoniously defer to the will of Christ, as they apprehend it; and whether earth or heaven be their present home, Christ is their acknowledged Prophet, Priest, and King. Now, and for ever, is he to them "for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty."

2. It extends over the WORLD.

There is given unto him dominion and glory, that

all people, and nations, and languages, should serve him; "the government is on his shoulders," and every spring, wheel, and movement of its ordered machinery is regulated by his agency. Is there evil in the city, and he hath not done it? or joy and gladness, and he hath not ordained it? The king's heart is in his hand, and he turneth it as the rivers of water are turned. The obdurate Pharoah yields, and lets the people go; Cyrus, who knows him not, sets at liberty his captives; the cross surmounts the eagle, on the banners of the ambitious Constantine; all, in fulfilment of his purpose. The heathen may rage, and the people imagine vain things, but the Lord's Christ hath them in derision. What though the nations be convulsed, and blood flow till it reach the horses' bridles, it is but for the dethronement of idolatry and superstition, or the overthrow of infidelity and licentiousness, that the way may be prepared for the universal reign of righteousness. The heathen are given to him for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession.

> "Kings shall fall down before him,
> And gold and incense bring;
> All nations shall adore him,
> His praise all people sing."

3. It extends over Heaven.

Exalted far above all principalities and powers, all might and dominion, Heaven's hosts pay him homage. As, in his humiliation, angels ministered to his wants, so, in his glory, they cast their crowns at his feet, and fly to execute his will. Whether Elijah needs to be strengthened, or Peter to be brought out of prison; whether the Assyrian is to be despoiled of his prey, or the great Deceiver of the nations to be bound; these

glorious spirits are commissioned to do it. Equally employed for him are ransomed saints, gathered from earth about his throne; and the song of Moses and the Lamb flows forever from their lips, into the ear of their Lord and Redeemer.

4. It extends over the World of woe.

Hell is the prison-house of his empire. He hath spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them, and binding them in chains of darkness. And if, when loosed for a little season, they rule the darkness of this world, he yet destroys their works, and from 'confusion, worse confounded,' brings forth the final peace and order. Every blow they aim at Zion, recoils upon themselves.

5. It extends over the Material Universe.

He hath stretched out the heavens as a curtain, and hung the earth upon nothing. He alone doth bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, and loose the bands of Orion, and bring forth Mazzaroth in his season, and guide Arcturus with his sons. He numbers the clouds in wisdom, and stays the bottles of heaven; provides the raven his food, and hunts the prey for the lion. Famine and pestilence are his ministers; earthquake and storm, elemental war and desolation, as well as the peaceful series of the seasons, go forth at his bidding. As by his power all things were created, so by his providence are all upheld, and by his authority are all controlled. "He is "All in all."

II.—his title to this dominion.

This is two-fold, and lies:

1. In the absolute perfectness of his character.—He is the "Holy One," who loveth righteousness and

hateth iniquity. With him are the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge. His goings forth have been from of old, even from everlasting. His understanding is infinite, his greatness unsearchable, and his goodness unbounded. Hence his right to hold the throne, as "God over all, blessed forever."

2. In his relation to the universe as REDEEMER.—Because he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth. Other orders of intelligence are scarcely less interested in the world's redemption than man, because it displays the manifold wisdom of God beyond any other of his works. Angels desire to look into this, as an exhibition of mercy and truth meeting together, of righteousness and peace embracing each other; God's law being magnified by it, his truth vindicated, yet salvation proffered to the condemned sinner. In no other department of the Divine administration are the fundamental principles of moral government, with their glorious results, so fully and sublimely disclosed. Well, then, may angels be required to worship Christ, and all creatures that have breath to praise him, as the Alpha and Omega in the kingdoms of Nature, Providence, and Grace! And well may the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, surrounded by the hundred forty and four thousand, be honored by a new song, flowing as "the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder, and as the voice of harpers harping with their harps"—for He is worthy!

III.—THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH HE EXERCISES THIS DOMINION.

1. That he may manifest THE INFINITE GLORY.

Leaving the world to go to the Father, he said: "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." The principle thus developed lies at the foundation of all his administration, for it all has reference to the one work of Redemption. The essential glory of the Father admits neither of addition nor diminution; because his perfections are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. "He is a Rock; his work is perfect."

But this essential glory admits of increased or diminished manifestation. As created minds are susceptible of indefinite expansion, and of ever-increasing knowledge, and as the heart may be enlarged to worship God according to his excellent greatness, and the spirit be strengthened in its faith, quickened in its obedience, and made more clearly to reflect the lustre of heaven, through the wonder-working power of Christ—so, 'herein is the Father glorified.'

2. That he may promote THE HAPPINESS OF THE INTELLIGENT CREATION.

Two provinces under his sceptre are in revolt: the world in which we live, and the world of fallen spirits. From the silence of Revelation, and the assurance of the Saviour that he has other sheep which are not of this fold, we are justified in the inference that inhabitants of other worlds are happy in uninterrupted communion with God; and that, numerous as human sinners and fallen angels are, they are inconceivably outnumbered by the myriads of intelligences who worship God without ceasing. And even of human sinners, thousands of thousands, and ten thousand times ten

thousand, shall reign as kings and priests before God forever.

Still, it is not to be denied that within the dominions of Christ there not only is, but will continue to be, misery without end. He himself affirms it. Nor is this a greater mystery than the existence of sin itself; than which, nothing is more baffling to the understanding of man, when searching into the wondrous elements and movements of the Divine administration.

It is enough, however, to know, that sin is a voluntary matter; that no man is compelled to its commission, by any power beyond himself; that Christ appears its mighty antagonist, and urges not only authority, but motives of infinite weight against it; that man has an understanding fitting him to weigh these motives, and a law written on the heart to enforce them, and is therefore without excuse for his transgression.

Still aside from this, too, and above it all, is the fact, that sin's entrance into the world lies at the foundation of Christ's dominion, as the God-man, Mediator. It was to *destroy* the works of the devil, and to advance Jehovah's glory in the salvation of men, that he ascended the mediatorial throne. He took the kingdom, after sin and death had entered it; and he still maintains those Divine operations by which men become partakers of the blessings of holiness, and prepared for its final consummation. And, to use the eloquent language of another, a divine of a former generation in this very city,* when speaking of this kingdom of Christ, "when it rises up before us, in all its grandeur of design, collecting and conducting to the heavens of God, millions of immortals, in comparison with the least of

* Dr. John M. Mason.

whom the destruction of the material universe were a thing of naught—whatever the carnal mind calls vast and magnificent, shrinks away into nothing!"

Can a doubt then remain, that the character of the Supreme will be more perfectly unfolded, the purity of his law more fully vindicated, and the holy in heart be forever strengthened in their love, by the admission of sin into the universe, and the conquest of it by Christ; through the revelation of its deformity and shame, as contrasted with the beauty and glory of holiness, shining in the person of him who weareth many crowns? God will be glorified, even through him who leaves the bar of judgment speechless; much more, then, through the songs of those delivered from so great a death, and shouting, in their triumph, "Worthy the Lamb that was slain!"

REFLECTIONS.

1. Opposition to Christ is unavailing.

The pillars of heaven are not more immovable than his purpose to subdue all things unto himself. And when thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, fall before him, can he whose habitation is in the dust withstand him? Let the fool say in his heart, "No God!" Let him yield to the tempter, sear his conscience, and add drunkenness to thirst; nay, let the whole world rally beneath the banner of Satan, and draw the sword, light the fagot, and deal out destruction and death on those that fear the Lord; their defeat is as sure as the word of Jehovah! Righteousness will be maintained. The designs of Mercy will be accomplished. Indignation will fall on the head of the wicked; while glory, honor, and immortality will reward the just. But, why do the claims of Christ meet

such resistance? He doeth all things well! He is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens! O that Earth, throughout her whole domain, would bow to his sceptre, and join with Heaven, to crown him Lord of all!

2. Indifference to Christ's glory, becomes none who love him.

For them, he drank deep of the cup of sorrows; and for them, he hath ascended up on high, to make intercession, to regulate the movements of other worlds, and to provide for his children everlasting mansions. Beyond this, voluntary obligations bind them to glorify him; for they have sworn to present themselves, with all they have and are, forever, a sacrifice upon his altar. Such engagements stand on heaven's record. Indifference to his cause, then, is neither fitting nor blameless. 'Here, Lord, am I! replenish me with thy grace! unveil to me thy glory! do with me whatsoever thou wilt!' Surely this should be the cry of every believer!

3. Nothing great and good can be accomplished, within the earthly dominions of Jesus, without earnest labor.

Aside from this, neither can the individual mind be enlightened, nor the conscience aroused, nor the heart subdued, nor the life regulated as God would have it. Much less, can the world be transformed into a quiet resting place of the saints, and all its sorrowings be converted into rejoicings. Let revolted man be found where he may, on continent or isle of the sea, on the throne or in the lazaretto, compassion must follow him, the voice of persuasion must reach him, and the arm of love be thrown around him, to bring him to Christ.

But this involves all-absorbing labor, performed in the spirit of prophets and apostles, nay, of the Redeemer himself. And, only when this is done, throughout the church, shall earth assume its true character. Then there will be joy in the presence of angels, and the Lord God will rejoice over his people with joy!

4. A large revenue of glory is due to Christ, from that province in his dominions which we occupy.

On no people under heaven hath he stronger claims. Were another prophet to arise, having his eyes open upon the land given to us, he would exclaim, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" We are made to ride on the high places of the earth, that we may eat the increase of our fields, and suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock. Nations have been driven out before us, greater and mightier than we, that we might enter in, and take the land for an inheritance, as it is this day.

You hardly need to be reminded of its extent; embracing, as it does, an area larger than that held by the five controlling powers of Europe, and, excepting Russia, more than twice as large as all the European states and kingdoms combined. Nor need you be told of its rapidly increasing population; of its remoteness from the battle-fields of the old world; of its mild and popular government; of its civil and religious freedom; of its wide spread intellectual privileges; of its abundant contributions to individual wealth, and to national prosperity; of its commercial advantages, and its boundless resources for promoting the moral improvement of the world—to be convinced that He, on whose head are many crowns, justly expects from it a large revenue of glory.

Three millions of square miles of that soil redeemed unto God by his blood, and partially enlightened by his Spirit, is too much to be relinquished to the sway of the powers of darkness without a struggle. And a population shooting forth in such strength that, in the language of Burke, "state the numbers high as we will, while the dispute continues, the exaggeration ends," a population that doubles every five-and-twenty years, may not be quietly surrendered to the deadly embraces of infidelity and vice; a population which, though affected but indirectly by the intrigues and violence of other nations, is yet sufficiently so affected, through the intermixture of foreign elements in the body politic, to require the putting forth of every energy, for the hastening of the conversion of its masses unto God! Government interposes no obstacles to the universal diffusion of Truth and Love here, through the combined learning, piety and wealth of Zion. Mind, untrammeled by state authority and hierarchical institutions, asks not 'Fathers,' nor 'Bishops,' more than civil rulers, for permission to select its field of action, and to prosecute its inquiries; and the heart bows to the God of heaven, or to the gods of earth, irrespective of all constraint. And where in the wide world is to be found a more perfect garden of nature—a land superior in its mountains and vallies, its lakes and streams—a land more teeming with riches on its surface and in its depths, more prolific in animal, vegetable and mineral productions, under the hand of industry and skill, and more exempt from the malaria that scatters pestilence and death broadcast over other regions of the earth?

Then, whether from the eminence we occupy, we turn our eyes Northward or Southward, immense territories open on our view, from Baffin's Bay to the Straits

of Magellan, more or less inhabited throughout, and capable of sustaining dense and happy populations, whenever the Sun of Righteousness shall penetrate their tangled forests and uncultivated plains. The loftiest mountains, the most luxuriant intervales, the most majestic rivers are there, all at present desecrated by the fanes of superstition, degraded by stolid ignorance, and involved in ceaseless strife, under the weight of despotism's iron arm, or the withering breath of anarchy. Amid these sad influences, millions on millions urge their way to eternity ; and other swelling millions are to follow them in future years,—whether to enjoy the radiations of a purer light, or to continue blinded like their fathers, is a point to be determined by the pervading spirit of the American Zion. This spirit alone can arouse them to a just appreciation of their intellectual and moral dignity, and of the inalienable rights with which Heaven has invested them, and inspire the purpose of their vindication. Schlegel, a few years since, referring to 'the contagious disorders' then threatening the quiet of European monarchies, declared "the true nursery of all these destructive principles, of the revolutionary school of France and the rest of Europe, to be North America." Nor did he mistake the fact. The principles of civil and religious liberty, that have disquieted European despots, shaken their thrones, and claimed recognition in tones of thunder, *are* those which form the basis of our country's preëminence. And these principles have their origin in the Bible, and draw their life-blood from the Cross. As surely as they are understood and cherished, in the modern "Land shadowing with wings," so surely will they extend, wherever the wind and waves waft our merchandise, or the venturous explorer, the earnest philanthropist, or the minister of religion, plant their

feet. Their progress cannot be arrested, nor their influences be resisted. The question is, *Shall they be sanctified?*

Let the moral character of our country be what it should be,—let our learning, statesmanship, and enterprise be baptized in the waters of Siloa, ere they go abroad to proclaim the worth of our laws and institutions,—and not a nation under heaven shall remain unblessed by them! But the Gospel alone, diffused in purity over the length and breadth of the land, and permeating in its influence the whole population, will give us that character, and render us the benefactors of the world. Let our people swell to scores of millions, and be pervaded by the spirit of wisdom and piety breathing from the oracles of God, and then every ship that leaves our shores, every civil or religious embassy to foreign lands, shall carry abroad an influence grateful to oppressed humanity. Thus, in a few short years, religious and civil emancipation shall crown the aspirings of all people; the dove of peace shall spread her wings over all lands; and earth, throughout, shall bow to Heaven's authority! Abundant, then, the revenue of glory flowing in upon Him who "weareth many crowns."

5. Since the Church especially reflects the glory of Christ, her prosperity is to be sought with invincible energy and perseverance.

Christ's glory is upon her; her birth-place is in heaven; her Father and protector is the eternal God; angels are her ministering servants; the armies of heaven throw their shields over her, and fight her battles. As the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, she smites all kingdoms in her progress, abolishes idols,

and compels the great men of the earth to do her homage, and lay their tribute at her feet.

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning!" In the same spirit did the Apostle to the Gentiles seek the salvation of Israel, and of the world, undaunted by perils, and glorying in stripes, imprisonments and death. To remove from deathless man the curse of God's violated law, to purify the fountain of the moral affections, shut up the open gateway of death, and lead the sanctified spirit into the presence of God, where is fullness of joy—what else so worthy of a seraph's zeal and effort!

"Salvation! O the joyful sound!"

Heaven, only, will reveal its preciousness and grandeur; when love and glory, beaming from the throne, shall entrance the ransomed spirit, and impart a happiness that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man understood! And who, that justly appreciates the soul's worth, and knows the sacred fellowship of saints and angels—who that has the mind which was in Christ, and looks joyfully onward to his ultimate triumph—must not rejoice in the reflection of his glory, through the prosperity of the church!

Moreover, the Church is man's only safeguard against exterminating judgments, this side the grave. The little church of the old world is no sooner shut up in the ark of gopher-wood, than the wheels of nature leave their track, and plunge man and beast, mountain and field, beneath the ocean wave! So long as one heir of heaven dwells in Sodom, the city is safe; the moment he departs, the people of the curse meet their doom. And when true Religion, as incorporated in the Church, shall have finally left the habitations of men,

the Angel of God, standing on the earth and on the sea, will lift his hand to heaven, and swear that time shall be no longer! Annihilate the Church, and you extinguish the light of the world. Lay her inclosures waste, let infidelity plant its foot amid the hills and vallies of a nation, and pour its streams of deadly pollution through her mountain gorges—let the dark banner of the god of this world float over the dismantled towers, and down-broken walls of the Church—then the Holy Spirit no longer humbles the pride nor subdues the unbelief, that bend not beneath the thunders nor melt before the flames of Sinai; but turning tearfully away, he leaves the fearful sentence pealing upon the ear, "Let the despisers wonder and perish!"

'Peace and good will' to suffering humanity, breathe only from lips that invite the weary and heavy-laden to Christ for rest. The relief of the disordered mind and the wounded spirit, supplies for the sons of want and for the stranger in distress, forgiveness to the enemy, equity to the oppressed, are promptings of the same authority that converts the sword into the plough-share, the spear into the pruning-hook, and that secures to every man the shadow of his own vine and fig-tree. Irreligion and superstition, infidelity and delusion, are equally powerless of good and prolific of evil, wherever they prevail.

And then, where are the powers of the human mind most fully developed? Whence, but from the bosom of the church, have sprung the Newtons and Lockes, the Bacons and Edwardses, who have extended the boundaries of human knowledge, and carried us up to its first principles? And where are the lights of education so diffused that the rich and the poor, the high and the low, are taught alike to reason justly, and

to act worthily of their immortal destiny? Where, but in lands that bow to the authority, and reflect the glory, of Christ! On the other hand, where are the flood-gates of depravity thrown wide open, where are vice and crime of every name palliated by a corrupt public sentiment, and perpetrated without hazard to reputation, and without danger of inflictions from civil law, except where the Gospel and its ministrations have lost their power, or have never made their influence felt? So unquestionable is this, that often has the unbeliever himself demanded the very ministry he scorned, and urged the necessity of its support, in defence of the endangered morals of community. "Their rock is not as our rock, our enemies themselves being judges."

When the evils and perils of spiritual destitution thus meet the eye, can we turn from them with the inquiry, What is all this to us? Oh, never! Let the elements of nature come in conflict, let the earth quake, and the lightnings play; let the noon-day destruction, or the noiseless pestilence, affright our cities; or let the clashing of arms, and the groans of thousands weltering in their blood, on the fields of Borodino or Inkermann, meet us on the highway of life; and we are not unmoved! How, then, without emotion and countervailing effort, can we witness the conflict of these moral elements; and the impetuous rush of millions, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, to the world of death, where the redemption of the soul ceaseth forever! Yet if such a catastrophe is to be avoided, the Gospel must be sent over the whole vast extent of the land; the cross must be planted on every hill top; the living water must be conducted through every valley; and the invitation must be poured on every ear, "Look unto me, and be ye saved!"

6. Fearful destitutions exist in our country, demanding immediate recognition and relief.

Twenty-four hundred years ago Israel saw the spot in ruins over which the Shekinah had hovered, where prophets had proclaimed the will of God, where priests had made atonement for the sins of the people, and where assembled congregations had long offered incense to the Most High. Desolation marched over it, and the enemies possessed it. The holy prophet wept for this, while the elders, in sack-cloth, sat upon the ground, and cast dust on their heads. Nor is Christendom a stranger to such destitutions and mournings. Many a child of God hangs his harp on the willows, because his pleasant things are taken away, and few are left to respond to the tears of his penitence, or the raptures of his praise.

Need I say that, in our own land, communities by thousands exist, where no church has been planted; or where, if planted, it has become powerless; and where religion, if existing at all, has retired into corners, and surrendered the field to ungodliness? where scattered churches, deserted tables of the Lord, dilapidated sanctuaries, faithless and immoral professors, or graceless zealots exulting in their vain triumphs over reason and conscience, meet the beholder on every side? Millions there are, not even nominally connected with any Christian denomination; not taught the existence of God, or a mediator, of heaven or hell; filling up large districts, whole counties indeed, abandoned to every untoward influence, and well-nigh loosed from all salutary restraint.

That the destitutions of our country are extensive and appalling—that ministers intellectually and morally qualified to guide men are few, compared with the

urgency of the demand—and that calls for holy ministrations are pressing, beyond the ability of the almoners of our bounty to meet them—are facts, both sorrowful and undeniable. Here and there, amid these destitutions, are gems that shall deck the crown of Zion's King; but scarcely are they recognized, for the rubbish that surrounds them, dim is their lustre, and the darkness comprehendeth them not. Jesus commands that these be gathered up, cleansed, and polished for his use, in the day of his approaching glory.

Living and faithful men only can do this. If revivals are to be enjoyed, and disciples multiplied, if law and order are to be maintained, vice and crime to be suppressed, and the bonds of society to be strengthened —then must the heralds of salvation lift up their voice like a trumpet, and proclaim through the land "Thy God, O Zion, reigneth!" Amid these wide-spread desolations, infidelity knows no shame; the supremacy of Christ, and the retributions of eternity, are laughed to scorn; ignorance and depravity engender every species of delusion, and nourish into maturity heresies the most fatal.

Think you there lurks no *danger* in the prevalence of such delusions and heresies among the spreading millions of our country? Is there no danger to the stability of divine institutions, and to the souls of men, when the oracles of God are unheeded? when the great commands, on which hang all the law and the prophets, are practically disavowed as the rule of life? when the national conscience is defiled by contact with oppression, and our country, as one expresses it, 'still drags after it Slavery, that fatal heritage of another age, as the convict drags his chain and ball'? when this immense and enduring system of legalized oppression overshadows us with a cloud dark and portentous

as Egypt's night, pregnant with storm and tempest, and threatening righteous retribution for injuries inflicted on God's image in the form of humanity? when the pretensions of an apostate church to the exclusive possession of Heaven's grace are treated with respect, and her schools and colleges share Protestant patronage? when the disciples of Loyola swarm like locusts in the land, and the peculiar treasures of kings are sent from abroad to sustain them? and when ghostly prelates, sworn to the extermination of heresy, control the action of individuals, of legislative bodies even, at their pleasure? I repeat the question—Is there no danger in this? If, even now, we be not sleeping on the crater's edge, whose fiery floods threaten an overthrow of our civil and religious liberties more terrible than was felt by Pompeii or Herculaneum, the signs of the times and the interpretations of prophecy deceive us!

Vainly do we flatter ourselves with expectations of safety, on the ground that light is abroad, that the spirit of piety is in action, and that the world is too far advanced in years to be again seduced into folly by the mother of harlots! Though we cry "peace, peace," war is kindling, and the battles of Romanism and of Slavery are to be fought to their end, on our own soil. And, however quiet our slumbers and delicious our dreamings the flames, working up their way beneath us, may burst forth ere we are aware, and unless God prevent, end our dreams and liberties together! Well may we fear the Antichrist, who pronounces the Bible an insufficient guide to heaven; who proposes other mediators than the Lord Jesus Christ; and who proclaims plenary indulgence to sin, on payment of the price! Well may we fear the ecclesiastical despotism

that bound all Europe in chains for more than a thousand years; dethroning kings, overturning kingdoms, and shedding blood enough for navies to swim in; and that still holds in its remorseless grasp the liberties of every Christian nation, not emancipated by the word of God! I say, well may we fear this, so long as sin reigns in human hearts, and ambition, covetousness, and a reckless disregard for Heaven's authority, maintain their ascendency in high places.

Nor are these dangers to be successfully met, till the public eye is more widely opened, and the pulse of the great community beats more harmoniously with the spirit of prophecy, assuring the downfall of whatever opposeth and exalteth itself against God. Then will the heralds of salvation, clothed in full Christian panoply, go forth to the conflict in vastly increased numbers; and, sustained by the combined energies of Zion, their courage and high resolve shall never fail, while they 'play the man for God' against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places.

Nor can it be that in a land filled with plenty, like our own, 'sucking of the abundance of the seas and of treasures hid in the sand,' there should be a want of MEANS to sustain the self-denying missionary. If he be not thus sustained, it is because the churches do not understand their obligations, or are not prepared by the love of God to meet them. Two things are certain, as the ordinances of Heaven: viz. More *may* be done than has ever yet been attempted, to make this land the land of Immanuel; and, More *must* be done, if that end is to be attained.

The recent additions to our original domain,—the fertile hills and vales of Oregon, the rich bottom and

table lands of Texas, the auriferous sands and streams of California, with its mountain steeps and smiling bays, no less than the recently opened prairies and luxuriant valleys of Kansas and Nebraska—are rapidly filling with an enterprising yet heterogeneous population, which demands immediate and large ministration to its spiritual necessities. Few of the hardy pioneers in those outstretching regions of the West, feel the pressure of their spiritual wants, or are prepared to provide for themselves, or to ask of others those supplies of the bread of life, without which they perish. But such supplies Heaven demands for them; and only the open hand of Christian beneficence can meet that demand.

If these just claims of the advancing multitudes, destined soon to cover every acre between the Atlantic and the Pacific, are to be honored, the standard of pious liberality in our churches must be elevated far above its present stand-point. The claims of Jehovah Jesus, the relations of man to time and to eternity, the riches of heaven, and all the hopes that centre there, demand a higher appreciation, and a nobler response from the bosom of Zion, than has yet been given. Tell me: What else has the Christian to live or to die for, but the glory of Him who "weareth many crowns!" And shall he ever hesitate to meet the sacrifice to which heaven calls him, and to which his own vows pledge him? Shall not the rich man's gifts, and the widow's mites, flow onward together, in ever-deepening streams, that shall at length overpass their banks, and fertilize every arid waste and every rocky promontory between the seas, till they become the lovely adornments of the garden of the Lord?

Fain would I see every where displayed the spirit

of one, who supports herself and her aged parents, and still, by economy, saves ten dollars a year to send the Gospel to the perishing! Or of another, who quits the rich and attractive home of her childhood, for the toils of a factory, that she may personally instruct the ignorant, and sustain the missionary abroad! Or of the revolutionary soldier, who, crutch in hand, deposits annually nine-tenths of his pension in the Lord's treasury! Or of the enfeebled day-laborer, who lays aside a fifth of his earnings, as a benefaction to the cause of missions! Or of Richard Baxter, who first contrived to need as little as possible; then, to lay out nothing on things unnecessary; then, to profit others by whatever he used himself; and, finally, to do all the good possible with whatever he could save, of the competency God gave him! And more than all, the spirit of Him who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might become rich!

When such offerings are made, and are sanctified by prayer and Heaven's blessing, neither will Paul plant, nor Apollos water, in vain. The missionary will go forth armed, like Bunyan's Great-heart, with sword, helmet, and shield. The house of the Lord will arise here and there, wherever needed, in simple majesty; new congregations will be gathered, and churches organized; schools will be established, benevolent associations be formed, and converts to Jesus be multiplied. And then, the voice of thanksgiving and praise, flowing from ten thousand hearts, will ascend to the throne of God, and meeting the joyous response of ten thousand times ten thousand, will bring down blessings, in endless variety and infinite profusion, on all who have freely given, as they have freely received!

7. The liberal support of Home Missions brings immediate glory to Christ.

No churches in the land are more ready to deny themselves, and to identify the interests of the church universal with their own, than those planted and nurtured by Missionary labor. Their piety is indeed often warmer, and their active devotedness greater, than that of churches long nursed in the lap of ease and plenty.

Well did I know a feeble church in New England, gone so far down the valley of the shadow of death a few years since, that when one of the most eminent of our foreign Missionaries, previous to leaving his country, offered them three months' service, if they would simply *board* him, they declined the overture, through inability to meet the terms. The Missionary Society, like the good Samaritan, passing by and seeing their distress, had compassion upon them, took them up, and cared for them. A few years only elapsed, when religion revived, strength returned, they rose up in the name of the Lord, disclaimed further dependence on man, and, beyond their expenditures at home, cast four hundred dollars at once into heaven's treasury for distribution abroad; and they have increased their contributions, till now no country church exceeds them in liberality! Only a specimen this, of what is in the course of accomplishment throughout the land, by the action of the American Home Missionary Society.

A large proportion of the youthful talent, directed to the ministry, and to other benevolent agencies, is drawn from Home Missionary fields. "God has blessed my labors," says one, "to the conversion of FIVE YOUNG MEN, well prepared by nature and grace to preach the gospel. What shall I do with them?" "I have sent three young men to college to-day, who I expect will be

ministers," says another; "and my church is not only giving the dew of her youth to the Lord, but has this year returned more than an hundred dollars into the treasury."

Then, if the interests of common school education, if habits of industry, the cultivation of a noble public spirit, the advance of temperance, and the maintenance of just law, and of true social order, are better sustained in one portion of Zion than in another, it is where the laborious Home Missionary is established and at work. Beyond other men, he feels the presence of "a great cloud of witnesses." Not the eyes of his people only, but of his brethren abroad, and of the churches at large, as well as the eye of Heaven, are upon him, constraining him to lay aside every weight, and to run with patience the race set before him. And many of the loveliest spots amid New England communities are those, where the heart and hand of the Missionary have nurtured trees of righteousness, for transplantation into the Paradise above.

And now, dear brethren, let me ask you, in the presence of Him who "weareth many crowns,"—for He is in the midst of us!—*What will ye do*, beyond what ye have already done, to raise from the dust some hundreds of feeble churches, long since planted by the hand of God? and for the younger churches, struggling against difficulties for a precarious existence? What will ye do for the planting of other churches, by scores and hundreds, to form radiating points of Immanuel's glory? and for the restoring of Sabbaths and sanctuaries to the destitute HALF of your country's population? In a word: *What will ye do*, to give "the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom, and the dominion under the whole heaven," into the hand of the

Great God your Saviour? More effectively you cannot labor for this end, than in multiplying and sending abroad heralds of salvation, over the whole reach of our moral desolations, following them with your 'prayers and alms,' like the Roman centurion.

Nor is the encouragement of Providence small, to those who heartily labor in this work. When the Society whose anniversary we celebrate has sustained laborers in the field, whose aggregate services, for twenty-nine years, exceed sixteen thousand five hundred years of missionary labor; who have been instrumental in adding to the churches more than a hundred and thirty-two thousand souls; and who have established thousands of Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes, elevating the moral character of hundreds of thousands not yet brought to Jesus' feet,—the smiles of Heaven on this enterprise, and the Divine influence accompanying these preachers of righteousness, cannot be doubted. And when we add the salutary reforms they have started and sustained in their respective localities; their direct and indirect influence in the establishment of the Common School, the High School, and the College, amid the prairies and forests so lately tenanted by the deer and the buffalo, or the wolf and the Indian hunter; when we know that they have broken up a thousand leagues of fallow ground, gathered out the stones, turned the desert into a fruitful field, and cast up a highway for the return of future generations to God—have we not the marked encouragement of Providence to persevere in these labors of love?

What, then, I ask again, will ye do in the future, beyond what ye have done in the past, in this work? Surely, you will not for a moment forget that the

foundations of an empire, of unsurpassed extent and glory, are here being laid! and that it will require but the lapse of a century or two to cover the broad area of our country with hundreds of millions, who shall extend a resistless influence over the world's destinies! And is it not wise—nay, is it not imperative on us, as God's authority can make it—to plant the gospel in its purity, at the earliest hour, in every part of this domain? and then to sustain it, by every required sacrifice, till its principles of love and meekness shall be firmly grounded, as the everlasting hills, in the nation's heart?

Brethren! make up your minds for increased labor and sacrifice, and take hold on the enterprise with larger heart and stronger hand than ever before! Some of us must soon pass away to the judgment, for our work is well nigh finished in this world of death; but, we hope then, through rich and boundless grace, to look back from the heavenly hills, sympathetically and joyously, on the spirit of devotion that shall animate the bosoms of our sons and younger brethren, urging them onward in the work devolved on them by Heaven; —a work surpassingly great, if you will allow credit to individual convictions, matured into certainty by thoughtfulness and action extended over scores of years; or rather, if you admit the supreme authority that binds to its prosecution, and apprehend the 'exceeding great and eternal weight of glory' to be secured by its accomplishment! Heaven, earth, and hell, unite in urging you onward. In the language of another, "the heavenly hosts are looking down to see in what estimation the commands of Christ are held; millions stretch out their hands, and implore your aid; and, methinks, I hear ten thousand of the Lost, lifting

up their voices, and saying, 'Send, O send, the preachers of the gospel, lest they also come to this place of torment!" Who, indeed, that claims to love Christ and his country, can withhold for a moment his whole influence from a cause that aims to turn back the dark river of moral death upon its source, and to conduct the streams of salvation, through each heaven-prepared channel, to every hamlet of the land! Rich or poor, learned or unlearned, all may freely share the labors and partake the honors of those who turn many to righteousness and to God!

Labors and honors these, splendid as those which invest the life and encircle the head of Him who "weareth many crowns;" ravishing as the song of the hundred forty and four thousand; and pure as the great white throne, on which the Eternal sits for judgment! Brethren! shall they be yours? Your own hearts will decide; your deeds will tell! Let that decision and testimony be entered on the records above, in characters of light, at this auspicious hour! Then shall the full fruition of earth's labors, and of heaven's honors, be learned by you, in the presence of Him whose many crowns fill the upper world with joys that mortal eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived!

And now, "Awake, O north wind, and come thou south, and blow upon this garden of the Lord, that the spices thereof may flow out!"

American Home Missionary Society.

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ABSTRACT OF THE ANNUAL REPORT,

MAY 9, 1855.

The number of ministers of the Gospel in the service of the Society, in 27 different States and Territories, during the year, has been 1,032.

Of the whole number, 528 have been the *pastors* or *stated supplies* of single congregations; 328 have ministered to two or three congregations each; and 176 have extended their labors over still wider fields.

Ten missionaries have preached to congregations of *colored* people; and 60 in foreign languages—19 to *Welsh*, and 34 to *German* congregations; and 7 to congregations of *Norwegians*, *Swedes*, *Swiss*, *Frenchmen* and *Hollanders*.

The *number of congregations and misssonary stations* supplied, in whole or in part, is 2,124.

The *aggregate of ministerial labor* performed, is equal to 815 years.

The number of *pupils in Sabbath schools*, is 64,800.

There have been added to the churches, 5,634, viz.: 2,948 on profession, and 2,686 by letter. *Forty eight* missionaries make mention, in their reports, of *revivals* of religion in their congregations; and 366 missionaries report 2,434 hopeful conversions.

Sixty six churches have been *organized* by the missionaries during the year; and 40, that had been dependent, have assumed the support of their own ministry.

Sixty one houses of worship have been *completed;* 38 *repaired;* and 52 others are in *process of erection.*

Eighty nine young men, in connection with the missionary churches, are in preparation for the gospel ministry.

Receipts.—$180,136 69.

Liabilities.—$190,206 08.

Payments.—$177,717 34—leaving $12,488 74 still due to missionaries for labor performed; towards canceling which, and meeting the further claims on commissions not yet expired—amounting in all to $96,518 40—there is a balance in the Treasury of $16,804 31—the greater part of it received in payment of legacies near the close of the year.

The pledges of the Society are now greater by $10,289 06 than at the date of the last Report. If these pledges are to be redeemed; if the work, which has been commenced in our new Territories and on the Pacific coast, is to be prosecuted as its exigencies require; if every well-qualified laborer is to be sent forth into the harvest-field, with the assurance that he shall not want; if this work of Home Evangelization, which has been borne upon the hearts of God's people so long, and with results so glorious, is to be carried forward another year without faltering; if it is to be extended, in any measure, as opportunities invite, and the necessities of our fellow-countrymen and the hope of the world and the exceeding great and precious promises of God imperiously demand, a great enlargement of pecuniary resources is indispensable.

12.

THE QUESTION AT ISSUE.

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED AT BROOKLYN, NEW YORK,

BEFORE THE

Society for the Promotion of Collegiate and Theological Education at the West.

BY

EDWARD BEECHER, D. D.

BOSTON:
PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN, 24 CONGRESS STREET.
1850.

"*Voted*, That the thanks of the Board be tendered to the Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., for his Discourse delivered last evening, and that he be requested to furnish a copy for publication."

An extract from the Minutes of the proceedings of the Directors of the Society for the Promotion of Collegiate and Theological Education at the West, at their Annual Meeting at Brooklyn, N. Y., October 31, 1849.

A. D. Eddy, *Secretary.*

SERMON.

ISAIAH LIX. 21, AND LX. 19.

AS FOR ME, THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, SAITH THE LORD; MY SPIRIT THAT IS UPON THEE, AND MY WORDS WHICH I HAVE PUT IN THY MOUTH, SHALL NOT DEPART OUT OF THY MOUTH, NOR OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THY SEED, NOR OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THY SEED'S SEED, SAITH THE LORD, FROM HENCEFORTH AND FOREVER.

THE SUN SHALL BE NO MORE THY LIGHT BY DAY; NEITHER FOR BRIGHTNESS SHALL THE MOON GIVE LIGHT UNTO THEE; BUT THE LORD SHALL BE UNTO THEE AN EVERLASTING LIGHT, AND THY GOD THY GLORY.

THE experience of ages has taught us, that the work of preserving uncorrupt and perpetuating true theological systems and right social organizations, is one of extreme difficulty. True theology is the direct antagonist of human depravity; and so are the practical systems to which it gives rise. The depraved heart, therefore, under the guise of free inquiry, and intellectual and moral progress, is constantly prone to subvert them. Thus in the most prominent intellectual and moral centre of Puritanism among us, some who have most ostentatiously and loudly professed themselves the advocates of free inquiry and progress, have terminated their career in infidelity and pantheism. The lamenta-

ble degeneracy of Protestantism in Geneva, Germany, and elsewhere, is a similar fact, too well known to need extended notice. Therefore when a system has in practice, and on a great scale, evinced its truth by its power to bless human society, earnest and untiring efforts are demanded, if we would preserve it uncorrupt, and by all appropriate means extend its influence. Such is Puritanism. Its leading features, as a working system, are the rejection of any infallible church authority; the recognition of the duty of testing all principles of doctrine and order, by the word of God; the repudiation of the theory of regeneration and sanctification by baptism and other sacraments; the belief of an intelligent regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit, through the truths of God's word; the employment of popular education to prepare the people to be thus intelligently regenerated and sanctified; and the establishment of higher schools as a means of promoting popular education, and of training an intelligent and highly educated ministry for the work of preaching the word of God. Such, then, are the leading features of Puritanism as a working system.

From this statement it is apparent that its great idea, its moving power, is THE WORD OF GOD. If the fundamental wish, the deepest and most intense desire of the system could be uttered in a prayer, it would adopt the words of the text and pray that God would put his word and his Spirit in the mouth and in the heart of its seed, from age to age, henceforth and forever. I consider the text as in spirit

an assurance that God will hear this prayer, and a prophetic anticipation of the final and glorious results of the all-pervading influences of the word of God. Then the sun shall be no more their light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto them; but the Lord shall be their everlasting light, and their God their glory. These words, then, are peculiarly appropriate to this occasion, when we are met to consider what efforts the providence of God demands from us, to extend Theological and Collegiate Education at the West.

I have accepted with pleasure the request to speak on this occasion, inasmuch as my residence for many years in that portion of our country, has produced in my mind convictions which I desire, as I have opportunity, to state and enforce.

I shall first consider the relations of the development of the West to the plans of God, and then what is the true question at issue before our Eastern Churches.

I. What then are the relations of the social, religious, and political developments of the West to the plans of God?

It flows from the nature of God, and it is admitted by all, that he acts on a system—by which I mean that his mind is fixed on a future result, and that all parts of his providence are so ordered that they work together as wheels in some vast machine, to secure that result. This system indeed is vast. It may, in some of its parts, surpass our comprehension; yet it is real. Nor have we any true knowl-

edge of the present or of the future, except as we derive it from the study of this plan. Some parts of this system are more easy to understand than others. There has been, in all ages, a main channel in which the destinies of this world have flowed.

Of old, the nations around the Mediterranean Sea acted more immediately on the great interests of humanity. On the South, Egypt and Carthage; on the East, the nations of Canaan, Tyre and her dependencies, Assyria, Babylonia and Persia; on the North, Asia Minor, Greece and Rome. In the midst of these, the Jews from age to age were employed by God in executing a system, both the end of which and the law of combination it is not hard to discover. Through them, the Messiah, the desire of all nations, at the fullness of time was to come; and the interactions and combinations of surrounding nations were directed and overruled with express reference to this great event and its results.

The place of the northern nations of Europe and Asia in the system is scarcely less plain. They were the "northern iron and steel" wherewith God broke in pieces the nations of southern Europe, when luxury had rendered them effeminate, and the measure of their iniquity was full. Thus God raised up from time to time new nations, hardy and vigorous, and having used them as rods to scourge degenerate communities, and having by them given an impulse to the progress of human affairs, he broke them in pieces in their turn and cast them aside.

But it is not so easy to bring into the system the remoter nations of eastern Asia, and central and southern Africa. For their lot was cast so far from the centre of illumination that the light did not even gild their mountain tops — but from age to age they lived and died pagans. Nor has their destiny seemed, except incidentally, and that in a very slight degree, to intwine or commingle itself with the main interests of the race.

In modern times we are able to trace a still wider plan, and at the present day it obviously includes the whole world. Nor if we will study the word of God can we be ignorant of the result to which all things tend, and which they will at last surely reach—the binding of Satan, the entire destruction of his system, and the universal establishment of the kingdom of Christ on earth.

And yet in modern as well as in ancient times there has been and still is a main channel in which the destinies of the world have flowed. The moving power of the world no longer lies in the nations around the Mediterranean; but in the nations of northern and western Europe, and in the United States of North America. The Atlantic Ocean is to the modern world what the Mediterranean Sea was to the ancient. Meanwhile, the Papacy and Mohammedanism, the two great religious despotisms of the globe, possess all the countries that surround the Mediterranean, where of old the destinies of the people of God were developed, and where Christianity first began its triumphant progress.

But of all the developments of modern times,

there is none more sublime in its aspects, than the origin, progress and future destinies of our own nation, and especially of the rising States of the West.

Nor is this the language of national pride or partiality. De Tocqueville, the sagacious and liberal minded French philosopher, who is a Roman Catholic, and of course under the influence of no national or religious bias in our favor, mentions us as one of the two great nations of modern times who have grown up unnoticed, and suddenly assumed a prominent place among the nations.

"These are Russia and America. Both are vast in extent and in prospective growth. But in their principles how unlike—one is a democracy, the other centers all in a despotism.—The principal instrument of the former is freedom, of the latter servitude. Their starting point is different, their courses are not the same; yet each of them seems to be marked out by the will of Heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe."

In the recent revolutions of Europe, our destinies came into direct collision with those of Russia. We were, and we were felt to be, by our example and principles, the sustaining and animating power of the nations struggling for liberty and popular rights. Russia on the other hand was the life of the system of absolutism, and of despotic brute force. Though on opposite sides of the ocean, we are constantly wrestling together for the mastery. The sword of Russia that smote down the liberties of Hungary was in reality aimed at us. But the

conflict is not ended. It will come on again. The world is not wide enough for both systems, nor is our development but just begun.

An English writer, quoted in the Encyclopedia Americana, after an estimate of the population that the natural resources of our continent can sustain, says that "the destinies of the world are as yet only beginning to be evolved. The imagination is lost, in contemplating a state of things (in our future progress) which will make so great a change in the condition of the world. We almost fancy it is a dream; and yet the result is based on principles quite as certain as those that govern the conduct of men in their ordinary pursuits. Nearly all social improvements spring from the reciprocal influence of large and condensed numbers, and diffused intelligence. What, then, will be the state of society generally, in America, two centuries hence, when a thousand or two thousand millions of civilized men are crowded in a space comparatively so narrow, and speaking only two languages, as will doubtless be the case? History shows that wealth, power, science, literature, all follow in the train of numbers, general intelligence and freedom. The same causes which transferred the sceptre of civilization and the weight of her influence from the banks of the Euphrates and the Nile to western Europe, must in the course of no long period carry them from the latter to the plains of the Mississippi and the Amazon."

Nor was the mind of our own Evarts less excited as he touched this theme. The last, and beyond

all doubt the sublimest effort of his pen is an almost prophetic anticipation of the future progress of our country. With burning emotions he depicts the sublimity of our destiny—our certain greatness in evil or in good—the loftiness of our elevation or the depth of our fall.

Nor are these convictions chimerical, or visionary. A simple statement of facts will produce the same impression on the minds of all.

Who that reflects that in one century our population will fall little short of three hundred millions, all speaking one language, and that we are to transmit to them their institutions, religious opinions, and character, can fail to feel an overwhelming emotion of sublimity in view of such a prospect?

Nor is this emotion lessened but increased when we study the past history of nations whose destiny is in a measure evolved.

From hordes of barbarous tribes came the Germany that now is—whose science, philosophy and philology are, for good or for evil, the study of the civilized world. From savage Anglo-Saxons and ferocious Normans came England, our mother, from whom we derived our language, our literature, our sciences, and the fundamental principles of our liberties and laws. From certain knights Templar, who located themselves on the Vistula, and subdued the barbarous tribes on the shores of the Baltic, came Prussia, whose system of common school education the profoundest scholars of Europe and of our own land have not disdained to study. A rude ancestry! And slowly were these powers evolved

through the conflicts of centuries. But now with emotions of sublimity we study their origin, progress, and present influence on the world. The few pages that the philosophic historian, Tacitus, wrote on the manners of the Germans, are deemed an invaluable treasure by their refined and civilized descendants. Uncouth and barbarous names are invested with new interest. Profound researches are made and maps are constructed, to show the locations of the Istœvones, the Ingœvones, the Hemiones, the Catti, the Chauci, the Cherusci, and other tribes with names equally euphonious.

What then will it be a few centuries hence to trace the progress of a nation with founders such as God assigned to us, and rushing up with such rapidity to its gigantic maturity!

Nor is it a small item that these nations were formed whilst the destinies of the world were slowly evolved in centuries of gloom, whilst our nation has started on its career as the world is fast hastening to its crisis, and new moral powers are evolving on every side. Even in the dark ages, the magnitude of the destinies of such a nation, would have dazzled the mind. How much more brilliant must they be when seen in the increasing radiance that shall illuminate the globe from the fiery throne and burning wheels of a coming God—and when even this radiance shall be lost in the meridian glories of that day when the sun of Zion shall shine full orbed, and shall no more go down, nor her moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be her everlasting light and her God her glory.

But if our destinies are thus great, seen in themselves, how much greater must they be when seen in their relations. For who can think that God has raised up a nation like this, founded on principles so peculiar, the mature result of the toils and sufferings and blood of past ages, for no end beyond itself? As the world now is, open to moral influence as never before, and in search of what it has never found, the true order of things, can such an example, whether of success or of failure, do otherwise than powerfully affect the convictions, conduct and destinies of the world? Nor does the providence of God towards us, when prayerfully studied, speak obscurely of his great designs in calling us into being at this point of the history of the world. Clearly it is one step in urging the nations onward, and gathering them in marshalled and opposing hosts, for the final war of mind which shall shatter the power of Satan and emancipate the human race.

Is not, then, the right direction of the religious destinies of that part of our nation which shall so shortly be the ruling power of the whole, worthy, not merely of excited declamation, or fervid but superficial action, but of profound study and fundamental and persevering effort?

Ought any local causes or temporary prejudices to blind the eyes of intelligent men to the philosophical grandeur and sublimity of such a rapid formation of vast States, and of the evolution of the human mind in circumstances so wonderful, so new?

And yet it is my deep conviction, that much as the Eastern mind has been excited with regard to the West, the great problem there to be solved has never been so deeply and thoroughly studied as its magnitude and importance demand.

Ideas of backwoodsmen, rude society, pecuniary mismanagement, religious enthusiasm and excesses fill some minds, and create an unintelligent prejudice against enlarged plans for the West; by others, the subject is seen under the influence of sectional feelings, or personal losses; and by others, it is seen in the general, and all plans to aid the West are helped without study; and sometimes those are most aided that deserve least confidence. By few is the subject seen in its true glory, as a part of the plans of an infinite God, the most wonderful evolution of human society that he has ever caused on earth, and for the highest and noblest ends.

Not therefore out of regard to the West, but to that God whose work it is, and to his all-glorious plans, I ask that this creation of his hands be studied as its importance demands.

II. What is the true question now at issue at the West, so far as the Puritan churches of the East are concerned?

1. It is not whether Christianity, in some form, shall take possession of the West, for it is a prize too great to be slighted; and if all the efforts of the Puritan churches were to cease—if all their colleges were to be disbanded—if all their missionaries were to return, there are those bearing the Christian

name who would, at least in some aspects of the case, rejoice at it, because it would give up the ground more entirely to them. These are not merely Romanists, but Protestant denominations holding truly enough of the fundamental articles of the Christian faith to enable them to save the soul.

Among these may be mentioned the Methodists, whose system covers the whole West, and who, in the early stages of society, have advanced with greater rapidity than the Puritan churches, because they are not delayed by a long and arduous course of education in the preparation of their ministers; but at once cover and occupy the ground. Besides these, the Baptists would not be at all reluctant to take possession of the whole field, that its gigantic energies might be devoted to their future increase. Nor would the Episcopalians be unwilling to undertake the same, if the country could be entirely surrendered to them, as the field of their future power.

Among these I do not mention the Roman Catholics, who for years have been planning how they may take possession of the whole, although, if they were to succeed, they would at least give to the West the Christian name, and a low style of civilization. Nor do I specify other advocates of decided error, bearing the Christian name, whose efforts and enterprise are powerfully affecting the destinies of the West.

In the bodies first mentioned, there is energy enough to take possession of the entire West, should all Puritan efforts cease; and these, together with

some smaller bodies not particularly specified, would give a Christian character ultimately to the whole West. Infidelity, atheism and worldliness I know exist there, and have power; *but they tend to no organization, but rather to social dissolution.* Therefore, beyond all doubt, Christian bodies, having organization as well as fundamental truth on their side, will finally prevail. In some form, therefore, the West will surely be Christian; either Protestant, or semi-Protestant, or Catholic, even if all Puritan efforts should cease.

It is on this point a significant fact, that politicians, even in the most recently formed western States, do not resort to infidelity as the road to popular favor. If they desire to secure votes, they are much more likely to join the Methodist, or some other church. They well know that the groundwork of society at the West is not infidel, but Christian.

The real question before the minds of the Puritan churches of the East is this. Shall we avail ourselves joyfully and energetically, of the opportunity offered to us by the providence of God, to co-operate with our Western brethren who are in the minority, and to stimulate them by hope, to put forth their energies in union with ours, in wise plans to develop our views of Education and Theology, at the West, so early and with such power, that they shall exert that influence which their importance demands in the formation of the character of that portion of our nation?

In this inquiry, we assume that if an opportunity

is offered to secure a result so great, enlightened and high-minded Christians, of enlarged views, will regard it not as a task to be performed reluctantly, to escape the goadings of a neglected conviction of duty, but as a privilege and an honor to be earnestly desired and eagerly grasped.

We assume, also, that the providence of God has offered us an opportunity and a channel, through which to gain this end, in our brethren, of like views with ourselves, scattered through every part of that widely-extended territory.

We also assume a fact which we are far too prone to forget, that they are greatly in the minority as a general fact, in every portion of that land, and that therefore we cannot pursue the same course that we should if they were in the majority, and certain in a few years, by the natural growth of the country, to control the greater portion of its wealth. If this were the case, we might well wait till the progress of years should enable them to do the work for themselves. But they are in the minority now, and the only way to prevent the course of development being more and more against them, is to secure to them the earliest and the most powerful intellectual and theological development possible, whilst the community is in its crude and forming state. THIS IS THE GREAT IDEA IN ALL OUR PLANS FOR FORMING THE WEST.

We cannot wait as in New England, assured that the vast majority of the people will feel and act as the Puritans did, who from the beginning formed a homogeneous community, intent on education as the

great idea of life. We must as soon as possible unite ourselves in sympathy with that minority who are the channel through whom our views of education and theology may be developed at the West, and impart, in its fullest measure, our own energy to them.

It is also implied that we are not to take the whole burden upon ourselves, but that we are to stimulate, develop, concentrate and direct their energies, which beyond all doubt we can easily do. No class of men are more easily aroused to high and honorable effort and self-sacrifice than they. Let the recent unparalleled efforts in behalf of the Western Reserve College bear witness.

It is also implied that if we put forth such efforts early, and with a liberality and energy commensurate with the ends in view, it will exert a controlling energy on the development of the West. Not that it will exclude other Christian bodies, and monopolize the ground; God forbid that we should desire this; we love and honor them all; but that it will become an element of immense power, to influence, modify and benefit every other element of civil and religious society.

Assuming all these things, the question is, Will we joyfully avail ourselves of the opportunity to do this work? Will we do it in season? Will we do it so energetically that the effort shall be worthy of the end? This is the question. Let me now present for your consideration the motives which call for and justify such efforts.

1. The origin and aim of the Puritan system of

theology and education, its worth as proved by trial, its relations to the origin of our nation, and its good deeds for the human race already recorded on the page of history, render it worthy of such efforts for its perpetuity and extension, and demand them in its behalf.

The great distinction of North America above every other portion of the globe, is that it was chosen by God to enjoy the honor of being the receptacle of Puritan ideas and organizations as developed in the earlier periods of the war with the Romish church and her cognate civil despotisms.

The system of Romanism, is not merely a religion; it contains in itself a political doctrine too, and leads to organizations adapted to express its ideas. Its system of sacramental regeneration and sanctification, is one great monopoly of spiritual power. It left to the people none at all; but delivered them up, bound hand and foot, into the hands of the great ecclesiastical corporation, of which the Pope was the head.

The civil counterpart of this in the state was the doctrine of an absolute, divine right of kings to rule, and of the corresponding duty of the people passively to obey their behests. The Church held civil rulers answerable to none but to herself. If they would do her will, and use the sword for her, all should be well. Such was the leagued and combined despotism that had thoroughly enslaved the European world. Of this system Puritanism was the first fully formed and maturely developed antagonist, in the whole range of its action, not

only in religion, but also in political ideas and organizations. It abjured alike the sacramental despotism of the priest, and the divine right of the monarch, and claimed unshackled freedom to obey God, *according to his Word*, whether in church or in state. It knew no power above the Bible. And, there being no room for its religious or political development in the old world, it was transplanted, here to grow. In its earlier stages it was still commingled with some elements foreign to its main tendencies. But these were dropped during the process of development, and those ideas of civil and religious liberty alone remain, which are the basis of our institutions, and have leavened the mass of the nation, and are leavening the world.

The Puritan system has thus been from the beginning the great antagonist of that prelatic despotism and formalism that once enslaved the nations. It has been the great restorer of spirituality, and of revivals, and of popular rights and organizations both in church and state. And in the war with the Papal system now coming on afresh, it is still the great conservative power of our nation. No other body of men is so well prepared to fight that final war as those who have been trained by Puritanism; and therefore the destiny of Puritanism in this country is the great question of the age.

The theology of the Puritan churches is fundamentally that of the Reformation. The great peculiarity of this system is, the prominence which it gives to the doctrine of human depravity, to God as a sovereign in the great work of saving men, and

to regeneration as effected through the truth by the Spirit. It is founded in deeper views of the philosophy of the divine and human mind than any other system, and imparts to the human character a more masculine energy than any other. It is eminently the system of spiritualism as opposed to formalism, —and of liberty and equality as opposed to centralization and despotism in church or state,—and is the great mother of modern popular education. Its most congenial forms of organic evolution are two — Congregationalism and Presbyterianism; agreeing in a decided opposition to Prelacy and Formalism in all degrees, and differing only in the question of the entire independence of particular churches.

This system is not only the mother of popular education, but of the system of collegiate and theological education in our land. The earliest colleges and theological seminaries, it founded—and of the large majority in this nation it still has the control. It is also the mother, in this land, of the system of benevolent organizations now existing among all denominations, for foreign and domestic evangelization. It originated the first leading societies that now exist, and stimulated others by their example to do the same.

Now this system certainly has its worth in the eyes of God, to our country and to the world. I do not say that it is beyond improvement; but I do fearlessly affirm, that it has done good deeds for our country and for the world; and if the final battle with the papacy is to be successfully fought, it has

yet a great work to do at the West. Not therefore as sectarians, but as friends of God, of their country, and of the world, the churches that hold this system are bound to inquire, what ought they to do to give it an all-pervading influence at the West, as an element in social development and organization?

I have sometimes feared that we are feeling less and less the impulse with which the system started; that the mainspring is nearly uncoiled, and the system running down. If it is so, still there are in the system all the needed elements of strength. It needs only to be wound up again. We need only to gain a new historical and religious ardor; to go back to the original fountain-heads of thought and feeling; to penetrate to the depths of the great contest; to study anew its progress, and to know that an apparent truce is no cessation of hostilities—that the hearts of the opposing systems are unchanged — that they still hate each other with deadly hatred, and are but taking breath for a final and desperate death-grapple, after which there shall come on no second war.

2. But if the Puritan system is to be thus reinvigorated and extended, what are the practical measures by which it can and must be done? Are they not indisputably those already specified?—to co-operate with the representatives of Puritan principles at the West, who are in a minority, in establishing and perfecting an elevated and energetic system of collegiate and theological education?

This is an essential part of the Puritan system. Without it, Puritan views of theology, education

and social organization, cannot be carried out and maintained. We cannot too often recall the great idea, that Puritanism is not merely a system of doctrine, but that it is a system of organization growing out of doctrine. The right and the duty of intelligent individual conversion, and communion with God, is the foundation of the Puritan theory of society. To enjoy this right, and perform this duty, man must be individually intelligent and free. Hence their views of religion and organization call for education, and are founded on it. The more perfectly they are carried out, the more educated and intelligent the whole community must become. But of such a system, a highly educated ministry is the mainspring. But such a ministry cannot be secured without colleges and theological seminaries. Hence an elevated and energetic system of collegiate and theological education, is an indispensable means of sustaining and extending the Puritan system. Give to the children of the Puritans at the West all else, and withhold this, and they cannot do their work. There is no other body of Christians of whom this is so emphatically true. The Roman Catholic system does not demand for its most powerful operation an educated and intelligent clergy, or people; it depends on sacraments and forms. But an ignorant people are peculiarly adapted to be swayed by sacraments and forms, and an ignorant priesthood are fully competent to administer them.

Nor was the system of the Methodists originally based on the indispensable necessity of an educated

and learned ministry. Nay of old they opposed the idea. They are, indeed, wisely changing their system; but are still far from the universal and deep feeling of the Puritan churches on the subject. Of large portions of the Baptist body, the same is true. But to the sons of the Puritans, a system of collegiate and theological education is the essential and fundamental idea in all well-organized society; take it away, and you break their heart.

3. On these principles the Puritan churches of the East have ever acted with reference to themselves. True, the present generation has not been called to the work of originally laying these foundations of society. Our fathers did it for us, and we have received and enlarged what others founded. And perhaps the fact that we were never without them, and that their influence is steady and all-pervading, has in a measure hidden from our minds their true worth and indispensable importance. Indeed, I never fully realized their worth, till I had resided at the West, and seen and felt the state of society without a strong educational heart. The system of our Fathers seemed so natural, that I could scarcely conceive of society without it. But when I had seen what society would be without a heart, then I revered alike their wisdom and benevolence in the system which they transmitted to us. If you would see the true worth of the system, suppose it destroyed. Let all our colleges be blotted out, and the doors of our theological seminaries be closed; then let every thinking man answer this question, With all our advancement, what is there

powerful enough to keep us from speedy and ruinous retrogression? Neither bibles, tracts, Sunday schools, or colporteurs, could do the work which our system of collegiate and theological education with silent, sublime and all-pervading energy constantly effects.

With all our advantages, is such a system absolutely essential to keep us from retrogression? How then can the descendants of the Puritans at the West, perform the great work of beginning the organization of the chaotic elements of society around them, and of laying foundations for other ages, in circumstances a hundred fold more difficult than ours, without the aid which is so indispensable even to us?

4. Without such a system a certain class of men, the men best educated and fitted to aid in the great work of organizing society, will not be willing to leave the East, and reside permanently at the West. The reason is, that they cannot do the work assigned to them without the appropriate means. No man skilled in constructing steam-boats, would consent to labor in attempting to construct a boat of the largest class, if he had nothing to work with but a few nails, some rough boards, and a little sheet iron. No more can an architect of society work without the appropriate means. It is not self-denial, but self-sacrifice, to live in anguish from a view of what ought to be done and could be done, with a consciousness of the power to do it with appropriate means, and yet without the ability to secure those means. It is a state of exquisite torment beyond

what any man can conceive who has not learned it by sad experience.

If now, instead of this, the Puritan churches would act on a scale of expenditure at all like that which enabled the Jesuits to arrest the progress of the Reformation, and to revolutionize one half of Europe that was ready to break away from the church of Rome, then they could command for the Western field the highest order of talent, to any extent and for any length of time. No one can read, without an emotion of sublimity, the history of the great Jesuit movement by means of colleges. Of a sudden, Europe was filled with colleges. Neither money or men were wanting. They made full proof of the system. And did it disappoint their hopes? Never was so vast, so effectual a power so suddenly developed. They took fast hold of the European world, and moved it to its deepest foundations. Why cannot the Puritan churches be persuaded to do for their system of liberty and truth a corresponding work at the West?

Let me more fully explain my meaning. A certain class of minds is needed at the West, not only to train ministers but to aid and advise in the thousand practical questions which that forming state of society calls up. Such minds at the East, even, can act only in certain spheres and with certain facilities. At the West, much more do they need the same. They need leisure, and time for study also, and exemption from wearing care. To provide these is not so great a work that the Puritan

churches, if convinced of its importance, could not do it. What they do every year for foreign missions would do it; and, once done, it is a finished work.

To be more particular. A select number of colleges could be so provided with funds, libraries, apparatus, and the material of instruction, that the exigencies of the community and the investigations of the age could be fully and worthily met, and their officers be at ease. They could be so sustained as not to be worn out, year after year, in journeys and solicitations for money, to the suspension of their appropriate duties, and the corrosion of their minds and the undermining of their health by pecuniary cares and liabilities. All this could be done; and in comparison with the ends to be obtained, it would be relatively the smallest and most economical expenditure that could be made.

Other systems before the public mind have no limit to their expenditure. They can employ illimitable sums, every year. It is not so with this. All that is essential could be done with a definite sum; and when done, its results will stand for all ages. Yet though larger sums have been expended on non-essentials, the Puritan churches have never had a full and enlarged conviction of what ought to be done, in this respect. They have acted, indeed. But never from a full study of the subject, and under the influence of deep conviction.

I do not speak hastily, nor in an excited mood. I love and honor the Puritan churches more than I do any other body of men on earth. But, on this

point, I cannot be mistaken. I have examined the subject from every point of vision; and the painful experience of fourteen long years has forced this conviction deeply into my mind. And one reason why I left my position was, that my mouth might be opened. For so long as I was an interested party, it would seem to be but the usual magnifying of my own office, and an earnest pleading for my own support. This I endured as long as I could. But now, as I am connected with no college, and dependent on the success of none for honor or support, I can speak what I have known and testify what I have seen.

5. This only is permanent in its influence, and increasing in its power from age to age. All else is superficial and transient. What though we educate and send out from the East successive generations of ministers? They die, and the demand for aid recurs, and increases. What though we educate and send out teachers? They too die, and the whole work must be done over again.

Is it possible to take care of the West on such principles? As well might we attempt to supply them with bread, whilst they neglected the work of raising crops from their own soil. No; nothing is permanent till the West has on her own soil, a well-endowed system of colleges and theological seminaries, from which she may permanently derive her own religious, literary and scientific teachers, and her professional men. Give her nothing but this, and give it in full power and perfection, and it will ultimately secure all else. Give all but this, and

nothing to any permanent purpose is done. Indeed, I know of nothing more sublime, more deeply affecting, than an ancient, well-endowed college, gathering around her, from year to year, her children returning from the toils and conflicts of life, to revive the memory of youthful studies and renew the power of early friendships, and to hail and cheer the youthful bands who are sent forth from year to year, to become leaders in the armies of truth, in the great conflicts of successive ages.

The permanent power exerted by one such institution as Yale, is incalculable. That power has been exerted in organizing and controlling all departments of human society. Where is not the voice of her children heard? Where is their power unfelt? The history of other ancient colleges will justify the same inquiries; and even the more youthful colleges of our land have in a few years effected a great and heart-cheering work, and are destined, we trust, to a career of permanent and ever-increasing usefulness.

Upon the measures that I advocate, therefore, depends the permanent intellectual, moral, and religious independence of the West. But in order to effect this, the work ought to be so thoroughly done, that the Western institutions can endure a comparison with those of the East. Otherwise a crippling competition will draw away their most valued pupils, to the better endowed institutions of the East.

Nor is it a difficult work to secure such a result, if its importance is truly understood and deeply felt. Let a spirit pervade the Puritan churches like that which pervaded the Jesuit body, and those whom

they influenced in the great reaction against the Reformation, and the work would be easily and most magnificently done.

6. The existence of such institutions will also tend to arouse and develop intellectual power in Western communities, that would otherwise slumber unknown and uncultivated.

The processes and results of education in an Eastern college are so remote from the mind of a Western youth, that they exert on him no inspiring influence, and arouse him to no new purposes. He knows educated men only as educated men. He never saw a rustic youthful townsman, or companion, transformed into a finished scholar, a public man. But plant a college in the midst of a Western community, and the transformations produced by a liberal education take place in full view of surrounding circles of Western youth. They see the son of the farmer or the mechanic, who has grown up amid themselves, prepared by a collegiate education to rise and shine among the leaders of society. And, from year to year, at each commencement, purposes are formed in the minds of youthful spectators, to aspire after equal developments of intellectual and moral power.

7. The good of all other systems demands the full evolution of Puritan views and systems of education and theology. In advocating the claims of our system, we act from no sectarian views, but from an enlarged regard to the public good. There is room for the combined energies of all evangelical Christians, in the great work of saving the West. An elevated example, in any one denomination, will

be a benefit to all. It will stimulate by example. It will elevate the standard of public sentiment. Our example, as a body, has already done a great work. The Methodist leaders are establishing their own system of collegiate and theological education, and appealed to the principles and power of the Puritan educational movements, in order to rouse their own body. Nor was the appeal vain. Other bodies have been affected in the same way. Let us then elevate and perfect our system at the West, and it will be a universal benefit. Enlarged views and sound principles will pervade and leaven the whole mass.

If such be a true view of this case, then the two great things that need to be done, are,

1. To relieve this Society from the superincumbent pressure of benevolent organizations under the weight of which it has been obliged to rise, so that it may take the place that a true view of the interests of our country and of society demands.

There has been no improper design on the part of any to put it in such a position; nor is there any narrow-minded, illiberal design to continue it in such a position. It was the natural result of giving to other causes the advantage of popular organizations, and public yearly presentations, whilst this had none. Colleges and theological seminaries, from their very magnitude and fundamental nature as organic powers, do not directly appeal to popular interest and sympathy. This is not true as it regards sending out missionaries, bibles and tracts, and establishing Sabbath schools. Yet, as we have seen, no community can be permanently organized,

christianized, and rendered independent of foreign aid, without these fundamental educational institutions. The effort of every wise community then, should be to make these prominent, and not to throw them into the shade. But while there was no organization to represent them, the system tended to that result, and the true balance has not yet been recovered.

The effect of any relative neglect of these great interests on the forming societies of the West, is like a paralysis of the heart in the body. It is vain to bestow any amount of attention on the members, if the heart is paralyzed and inefficient. So in vain are all efforts to give full development and saving energy to the West, till full power is given to the great heart of the social system.

2. There is needed in the leading minds of the nation a higher degree of conviction, impulse, and enthusiasm on this subject; an enthusiasm so earnest and powerful that it shall pervade the common mind, and lead to such large-minded and efficient measures as the magnificent and glorious results at which we aim demand.

No tongue can tell, no imagination conceive, the sure results of an early and vigorous use of the means that are in our power. What body of churches ever had offered to them such communities to form and educate? Was it a great thing to form a Germany, a France, an England? But here are communities destined to outrun them all in population, wealth, and power. Is it a great thing to evangelize old pagan nations, enfeebled by vices, bound by habits engendered by false religions, and

needing centuries of elevation after they are converted, in order to reach our standard? What then must it be to organize and develop, on our own principles, the new, vigorous, independent, Christian communities of the West? Nor could any thing be more easily done, if the Puritan churches, sustained by an enthusiastic faith, would but put forth their energies, resolutely and in season. And to induce them to do this, is fully in the power of the leading minds of the nation, especially of the clergy. It is they who have created, and who sustain, the great foreign missionary enterprize. They study it; they understand it; they feel it; they indoctrinate and inspire their people. Is not this an enterprize that demands of them equal study, intelligence and zeal?

God has given to the Puritan churches, as their glorious birth-right, the power to lead this nation in the great work of education, not only at the East, but at the West also. His providence calls them to it. It is their manifest destiny, their great mission. Ought ye not then, ye who are the leading minds of those churches, to understand and feel the greatness of the interests committed to you in trust, and the weight of the responsibility that rests on you? If ye will but fully understand this cause, and exert the same energy in its behalf that ye have been wont to put forth for other leading benevolent enterprizes, the result is sure. The interests involved are so great, so unspeakably great; the cause is so strong in its principles and so glorious in its results, that whatever ye choose resolutely to undertake, that by divine aid ye shall surely accomplish.

THE GOSPEL METHOD OF EVANGELIZATION.

A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE

AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION,

AT THE

ANNUAL MEETING

IN THE

UNION CHURCH, WORCESTER, MASS.,

SEPTEMBER 28TH, 1853.

BY

REV. PROF. HENRY E. PECK,

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1853.

SERMON.

THE GOSPEL METHOD OF EVANGELIZATION.

1 Cor. ix. 22.

"I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

Matt. iv. 8, 9, 10.

"Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Every institution, whether social, political, or religious, has an animus, a spirit, a something which makes it, as the case may be, useful or dangerous, worthy of affection, or deserving of reprobation.

Of no institution, and of no class of institutions, is this more true than it is of those which are designed for the propagation of religion. Men do not undertake to disseminate their religious sentiments or principles without being animated by a spirit which communicates itself to, and appears in the organization or institution through which their endeavors find a channel.

The Society of the Jesuits has a character as discernible as is that of any brother who wears the habit of the order. The American Missionary Association has a spirit as characteristic, and as easily known, as is that of any person who has come here to express an interest in its concerns. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions has a character as evident to observation as is that of any officer who conducts or of any member who promotes its affairs.

Now, the animus or spirit of an institution or organization is more apparent in the policy pursued in its operations than in any thing else—

more even than in its most solemn professions. Know the mode, the method by which, for instance, missionary associations perform their work, and you know the character, the soul of the Societies themselves. Let such an institution prove itself cunning and crafty in the accomplishment of its purpose, and though it may call itself "the Society of Jesus," and assert that it embodies the guilelessness of Christianity, it is known to be corrupt, and its name becomes, in public esteem, the synonym for whatever is hateful and dangerous. But let it in its public policy be honest, straight-forward, and truthful, and worthiness of character is ascribed to it by all who candidly observe it.

And to pass to another point, it may be said that as the spirit or animus of an institution is *indicated*, so is it *influenced* by the policy or method it observes in accomplishing its purpose. An institution may have in its beginning a commendable spirit; but, required to take up a certain line of policy, it may push that policy to such an extreme, or so maintain it in the face of evident indications that God would have the once useful method abandoned, as to suffer an entire loss of the character which, in its better day, made it worthy of praise. Many, it is to be feared, have been and are the institutions which have descended to a fearful degeneracy of character, through incautiousness in taking up policy which has reäcted on and destroyed the laudable purpose it was intended to execute.

If these, then, are the relations of the policy of institutions to their standing before the public and to their actual character or spirit, what topic can more properly ask the attention of those who convene to investigate the affairs of, and pray for, a missionary enterprise, than one which has respect to the method to be observed in the propagation of religious truth?

In this question I have hinted my design in setting before you the passages of the Scriptures which I have just read; but I may properly express my purpose more distinctly by saying that I propose to look to these texts FOR INDICATIONS OF THE MATERIAL POINTS OF POLICY TO BE REGARDED, WHETHER BY INDIVIDUALS OR BY INSTITUTIONS, IN THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL.

Following this purpose, then, I ask you to join me in looking, I. At the indications with respect to one aspect of the true method of evangelization which the first of our texts sets forth; for I may say here that our texts severally illustrate different though harmonious aspects or phases of the same thing.

The passage *now* before us — "I am made all things to all men" — is the language of the Apostle Paul, and describes the method by which he discharged the duties of his great office. We shall prepare ourselves

to understand the sense and appreciate the importance of what is here said of himself by the Apostle, if we spend a little time in considering some of the circumstances under which the writer of the words before us was raised up for and discharged the ministry committed unto him.

Paul, though of Jewish origin, was born in a Greek city, and belonged to a family which enjoyed at least some social elevation. He had familiar intercourse, in his early years, with the best of both Jewish and Greek society: and Greek society was then the most cultivated in the world. At his conversion he lost social position, and was brought into close affinity with those who occupied humble stations in life.

And varied as was the social, not less so was the *moral* history of Paul. Naturally impulsive, and in his early years violent in his prejudices and persecuting in his spirit, long a Hebrew of the Hebrews, he became at his conversion of meek and gentle mind, a Christian in whom was no guile.

This variety of intercourse with men of all degrees, and this variety of experience of almost all possible moral states, gave the Apostle an opportunity to know human nature in all its aspects; to realize how man feels and is inclined to act under the widely different influences to which, in different social positions, and with different temperaments, habits, and education, he is subjected. He knew, by experience of it, what temptation to arrogance and pride the rich suffer; he knew, by contact with it, to what temptation to desponding and churlish murmuring the poor are exposed. He knew, by trying it, how hard it is for the socially elevated to descend to the humiliation which, to follow Jesus, they cannot escape. He knew, by daily sight of it, how difficult it is for the mind unquickened by habits of thought, to waken itself to the activity required for a heart-work. He knew full well with how strong a hand prejudice holds to old opinions, and with what power some forms of temptation weigh with even a soul consecrated to the service of God. He knew how formalism imagines that it sees too much, and philosophy too little spiritualism in such a system as that of which Incarnate Deity is the centre. Jews, Greeks, Gentiles; men of all sorts and classes; men trained in all ways and in no ways; religious men, sensual men, fanatics, and philosophers, all men—he knew them all, and seemed to be able, as I have said, to realize the wants and measure the feelings of all.

This knowledge of human nature made Paul tolerant towards it. He did not forget, when he preached the gospel, that those to whom he preached were almost invariably acted on by influences which made them averse either to all truth, or to that form of truth on which he was inclined to insist. He did not forget that the Jew was in bondage to prejudice, the Greek to philosophy, and the gross Gentile to appetite. He did not forget that the Jew, though he sought salvation by Jesus, might yet

entertain strong regard for the temple worship. He did not forget that the Greek, though bending at the cross, might yet be disposed to ask a solution of its mystery. He did not forget that the pagan or the profligate, turned to the better way, might yet go on feeble knees through the strait path. Nay, rather remembering the frailties and the perverse tendencies of human nature, he bore with it as it rejected truth, and was patient with it as it only slowly groped its way out into the light. With the penitent Jew he prayed and vowed in the Temple, though for himself he was free from the law which required temple-service. With the believing Greek, he reasoned respecting mysteries, for the solution of which *he* was willing to wait till, in the light of eternity, they should no longer be mysteries. To the poor wretch, just escaped from the power of lust, he extended his own strong hand, and exclaiming, "I am more than conqueror through Him that loved me!" besought his trembling brother to hope for the same glorious conquest in which he rejoiced. He made it his business to strengthen weak hands and feeble knees. He denied himself luxuries, and even necessaries, lest by the use of even that which his conscience did not refuse to him, he might hurt the yet uninstructed consciences of others. He made forbearance to the frail a cardinal element in his scheme of Christian duty; and no precept did he ever utter more fervently than he did that in which he said to his Christian brethren, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak."

If, then, we are to give weight to the example of Paul, we must infer that he who has the true evangelizing spirit will be tolerant towards human weakness, and will pursue a method of labor which will make account of the effect on the moral state of men, of temperament, of training, of habit, and of social position. He will remember, in urging the claims of the gospel, that every man has frailties and besetments peculiar to himself, and that he is in bondage to some influence which, perhaps and probably, has no weight with any other being. He will remember that old notions may so distemper the moral eye, that truth cannot always be readily seen by it, and if seen, not fully understood; and that, until there is *prejudice*, or some other form of selfishness, there is no sin in this distemper. He will remember that impediments to acceptance of the truth may be inseparable from the social affinities of those for whose good he labors. He will remember that the uninitiated and the novice cannot see duty as he, a veteran, does, and that many things which would be entirely sinful in him might be no offense against right in one who knows less than he does.

And if for the individual to have the true evangelizing spirit, he must be tolerant, so, for an institution, a church, a Missionary Association or Society to have this spirit, it must be forbearing. It must not drive its

ponderous wheels over institutions, theories, and social distinctions which oppose themselves to it, but must rein its way on facile axle through such a course as a kind discrimination between ignorance and sin, between essential practice and non-essential conduct may open before it.

With one aspect of the true policy of evangelization before us, let us now turn, that we may observe another, to the text which stands second at the head of my discourse.

"Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

We have here a *drama*. The actors are, on the one hand, the father of lies, the being who either originates or accelerates the cheats, the oppressions, the cruelties, the iniquities of all forms, which blight human happiness, pervert the human mind, and fit the immortal soul for endless woe: on the other, the being on whom the heavy load of the world's redemption has been laid—who, more loving than an earthly father, and more tender than a mother, looks on no human woe without compassion, and on no sorrow without desiring to relieve it; the being who counted it no grief to try the temptations, the afflictions, the pains of men, and to encounter the bitterest of suffering, ay, *death*, that those who hated him might be saved. On a height overlooking the world, these persons, he who curses and he who blesses our race, confront each other.

The Arch-tempter, glorying in his power and in the mischiefs of which he has been the author, points his companion to the evils which the world endures; the selfishness, the malice, the bitter strife, the woes, the personal griefs, the bodily pains, the hungerings, the thirstings, the social and moral calamities, the arrogance of place, the depressions of the poor, the bereavements which extort a wail from the captive in the cell, and as well from the king on the throne; the opposition to truth, and the hostility to God which deface the fair earth, and deform the image of the Most High.

Saddening is the sight to the lowly and loving Man of Sorrows. Not more painful is the sight to the parent of the anguish of his first-born and only child which struggles in the embrace of a cruel death. Yes, saddening indeed, and the more afflictive to him, because he knows that the end of these sins and griefs and woes is not yet; that generation after generation of their offspring, in long procession, must still, through scores of centuries, traverse the path of human history: the more saddening too, because he knows that in conflict with these enemies of good, the disciples who shall take up the peace-dispensing gospel he has come to declare, must bear trials from which his own heroic soul, armed with highest powers, cannot but recoil.

The survey completed, the Deceiver says to the other, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Ah, is not this a tempting offer? The mastery of the world, the deliverance of that world from temptation, from sorrow, from discord, from physical and moral evils; and the rescue of the saints in all ages from the reproaches, the buffetings, the martyrdoms they must experience if Satan remains supreme; all these advantages to be gained by just one act, a compromise-act, an act which no eyes but those of them who are parties to it shall see, and which need never again be repeated. Will not the Saviour accept the offer? Nay! Hear his indignant reply! "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." With such emphatic rebuke does he meet the offer made him, and with that one sentence does he declare that not even to save the world, the object on which his heart is most set, will he pursue a course which will either involve himself in sin or indicate the least tolerance towards the *sins* of others.

Here, then, we have disclosed another of the aspects of the policy of true evangelization, viz.: that it will for no consideration, and however much it may be inclined to accommodate itself to the opinions and non-essential habits and customs of men — that it will for no consideration make any compromise with, nor any concession to sin; that not sapping and mining, but outspoken and inflexible hostility, will be the style of its opposition to all evident unrighteousness.

Leaving here the text before us, and taking up the inference which has been drawn from it, I may remark upon it, that evangelization must always act in distinct hostility to all sin, and with no tolerance for, or disposition to accommodate itself to any sin, or,

1. It cannot claim that it represents Christianity. Christianity makes no provision for sin, nor are the terms on which it offers its blessings indulgent towards the least sin; and if Christianity sternly discountenances all sin, shall a church, for instance, which, by a timid use of her discipline, shelters any known iniquity; or shall a religious newspaper which, by studied coldness towards reformatory enterprises, gives virtual countenance to the sin to be reformed; or shall a religious Publishing Society, which, pliant towards strong-handed vices, garbles the works of the honest dead—I will not say to suit the wishes of, but for the purpose of reaching the corrupt living; or shall a Missionary Society, which, by a time-serving policy, really lends its influence to the support of wrongs which humanity hates—shall either of these agencies call itself an instrument of *Christian* evangelization? Nay, surely, if there is any thing in a name.

2. Evangelization must always act in distinct hostility to all sin, or it

can accomplish no, or if any, no good results. Policy which is timorous and time-serving has no moral power. Pursued by unscrupulous Jesuits, it may seemingly convert heathen by nations, and bring kings to receive holy water at its summary baptism; but it never really converts the heart. It cajoles the passions, but does not move the will. Nay, it makes men scorn itself, and loathe the doctrine or system of which it is the vehicle. Leave condemnation of oppression out of the gospel you carry to him who holds his fellows in unrequited bondage, and will he respect, or admire, or truly embrace that gospel? Not if he has in him a sense of the first principles of right, of justice, of obligation.

Indeed, it is only aggressive policy, policy which, awed neither by the standing, the wealth, nor the threats of the transgressor, says boldly to him, "REPENT OF SIN OR PERISH," which is likely to bring him to exclaim, as David, convicted by the prophet's pointed parable and his bold charge, "Thou art the man," exclaimed, "I have sinned against the Lord."

True, a timorous evangelizing policy may sometimes produce results which promise well; but the *end* of those results shows that evil keeps growth with, if it does not outgrow the good produced. Send missionaries to a tribe or nation of pagan slaveholders; hesitate about requiring the missionaries to reprove the peculiar sin of the people, and let the missionaries hesitate about doing so; and though idols shall be given to the bats; and civilization develop a social state and political institutions; and though industry shall turn hunting-grounds into fruitful fields, and religious worship be offered in temples crowning hills on which pagan holocausts once smoked, yet will the civilization soon show itself to be a brutal state, and the political institutions prove themselves only perpetual supports of monstrous wrong. Read in the horrible pro-slavery laws of the so-called civilized and christianized Choctaws, the indications of the final issue of an evangelism which temporizes with sin.

And it is further to be noticed, that it is generally, if not always true, that even while temporizing evangelization is rewarded with partial good, the policy employed exerts a fatal reflex influence on those who employ it, and through them on others. Look, for illustration of this statement, to the history of the leading events which have transpired in this country within a few years. Chief among these events have been the annexation of Texas, as a slave State, to our federal Union; the waging, in behalf of slavery, of a wicked and almost wholly unprovoked war with Mexico; and the attempt by Congress, in the passage of the celebrated Compromise measures, to make the North for ever subservient to the slave power.

Now, by what process has this series of events, culminating in the Fugitive-Slave Bill—and what a climax of villany!—I ask, by what process this series of events, all designed to favor an infamous institution,

has been brought about? Brought about, be it observed, in the face of a national conscience which, even in the days of Madison and Jefferson, was strong enough to save our Constitution the disgrace of saying one word which should assume that slavery is a legal institution. By what process? Let the history of evangelizing instrumentalities answer. In the time named, one leading religious Publishing Society, the organ of a union of denominations, and sustained by prominent ministers and laymen, has seemingly, if not evidently, at the instance of slavery-propagandists, coolly condemned to withdrawal from circulation a little book which, with much merit, had no fault except that it says:

"What is a slave, Mother?" asked Mary. "Is it a servant?"

"Yes," replied her mother; "slaves are servants, for they work for their masters, and wait on them; but they are not hired servants; but are bought and sold like beasts, and have nothing but what their masters choose to give them. They are obliged to work very hard, and sometimes their masters use them cruelly, beat them, and starve them, and kill them; for they have nobody to help them. Sometimes they are chained together, and driven about like beasts."

Another more prominent Publishing Society has, like its fellow, either bowing before or subservient to our peculiar institution, while publishing treatises on the various sins and crimes which come within the compass of human guilt, constantly failed to rebuke, and even left wholly out of sight the sin of holding men in slavery, a sin known by it to be indulged in by a large class of those who read its publications; and has added to what seems like sycophancy in its course by expunging from the standard works issued from its press such passages as might be obnoxious to slaveholders.

And meantime, a leading Missionary Society has capped the volcanic fires of earnest desire for the relief of the bondman, kindled in many Christian hearts, with the truly extinguishing doctrine that slavery is an organic sin, and therefore not to be treated as one would treat sins not organic, such as drunkenness and falsehood.

These things—all measures of evangelizing policy—have occurred: and what effect have they had? Making those who were participants in them, and those who were subject to the influence of the participants, familiar with, and complacent towards, compromising and temporizing with sin. What effect could they have, other than such a debasement of the religious mind of the country, and then, of course, of the politics of the country, (for religion has hitherto been a check on our politics,) that the audacious legislation which enacted the Fugitive-Slave Bill was made possible, and was tamely acquiesced in by not a small portion of the professedly religious men of the land.

A temporizing evangelization, then, by the operation of the laws of our

nature, not only fails of its professed object, but recoils in evils not a few on those who undertake it, and often on the Church and world at large.

And I need hardly add, for a third remark respecting the policy of evangelization which compromises with sin, that it cannot have Divine approval. Surely, the Being who struck with instant death the man who thoughtlessly lifted a hand to steady the tottering ark, is not likely to be complacent towards an individual or an institution guilty of temporizing with evil that good may come.

Here resting this train of thought, I may properly repeat the inference drawn from our second text, that the true evangelizing spirit will, for no consideration, make any compromise with or concession to sin.

The two aspects of the proper method of evangelization are now before us; and with our picture complete we find that in this method are joined toleration toward the ignorance and sympathy with the trials of men, with undeviating, open hostility to sin.

And now, brethren, can the importance of making evangelizing policy embrace the two elements so frequently named on this occasion be too strongly emphasized, or can those who love truth be complained of if they strenuously insist that the work of saving souls, whether at home or abroad, shall be so conducted that while the weakness of man shall not be rudely assailed, his *sins* shall not pass unreproved? The question of course answers itself.

It was, if I mistake not, with an earnest and devout desire that Christianity might be rescued from the corruption to which, what seemed to many the time-serving policy of certain agencies and enterprises undertaken in her name were likely to subject her, that its founders originated the Society which now celebrates its Seventh Anniversary.

A brief review of the circumstances under which the American Missionary Association was established will not be out of place here.

In the course of the agitations which attended the anti-slavery movements of 1837 and onward, many thinking men through the country were led to feel that their *political* alliances were such as made them parties to the support of slavery. Doing works meet for repentance in their political associations, they were naturally led to look next at the moral aspects of their religious connections; and the result of the inquiries on this point which became somewhat prevalent was, that a forward step, especially in the matter of relations to missionary enterprises, was also necessary. The conviction ripening into action, its fruit was the following *call*.

"*To the Friends of Bible Missions in the State of New-York.*

"Brethren,—The undersigned are friends of Freedom and of Missions. Heretofore we have acted in the support of Missions through the Ameri-

can Board and kindred Associations. Numbers of us still do so. But we need not inform you that latterly strange things have come to the public knowledge. Slaveholders are in churches planted and sustained by the American Board. They are there approved and regular members. They have been welcomed to, and continued in them, without question, without reproof, without discipline. This has been done for more than one quarter of a century, and is still done; and now that the thing has at last come to be generally known, the Board, and those who direct its affairs, excuse, justify, and declare it apostolic and scriptural. They commend the missionaries who have done and still do it, as competent and faithful, and tell them, in terms, that they cannot advise, much less require them to change their proceeding. For aught that appears, the gospel we are to propagate through this agency is to tolerate, baptize, and welcome slavery to the Church, wherever it meets it in all the earth. Caste, polygamy, and other social wrongs are to have a like allowance, admission, and sanction. And they who would have it otherwise are assured that they transcend 'God's method,' and have not learned their 'procedure from the Bible.' . . . . .

"Brethren, the undersigned invite all the friends of freedom and of missions, who have heretofore coöperated with the American Board and kindred Associations, or who now do so, to meet in Convention at Syracuse, on Wednesday, the 18th of February next, for the purpose of considering generally the whole subject of the Bible methods of propagating the gospel; and particularly for the purpose of putting forth such a remonstrance against the practice referred to in the mission churches, and the positions taken in justification of it, as the cause of Bible missions demands; with the consideration of such practical measures as may seem best to give practical effect to the same."

In answer to this call, a large convention, composed in no small measure of men eminent for ability to comprehend truth and for devotion to duty, came together.

During the session of the convention, the policy of the Missionary Board with which most of the delegates had been in the habit of acting was illustrated by a quotation from one of its own Annual Reports, the Report* presented at the meeting held in Brooklyn, N. Y., in the autumn of 1845.

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* This Report was called out by the presentation to the Board at a previous session of several petitions, asking for some action on the part of the Board, which should silence the charges of a disposition to be time-serving with respect to its relations to slavery, which were current in some circles. The spirit of the Report (certainly to a degree) embraced the doctrine that slave-holding, as such, is not to be treated in the matter of religious instruction, admonition, and discipline, as are drunkenness, falsehood, and gaming.

The quotation was adduced as a fair exponent of the views held by the leading officers of the Board with respect to some of the functions and methods of evangelization, and is in these words:

"But slavery is not the only social wrong to be met in the progress of the missionary work, and to which the principles which are adopted in prosecuting that

When this frank and distinct avowal of the policy of the American Board, with respect to "organic" sins, was produced in the convention to which I have referred, and when it was proved by reference to the instructions given by the Prudential Committee to missionaries set apart to labor among the oriental churches, instructions which charged its servants to make no assault on the rites and ceremonies which the very missionaries thus charged have described as being "grossly idolatrous," and as consisting in part of homage to the image of the "immaculate mother of God;" and when it was further proved, by reference to documents showing that the Committee had refused to allow missionaries to organize churches for the shelter and culture of converts in the East, who dared not subject themselves to the perverting influences which abounded in their national churches; I say, when it was proved in this way that the Board was disposed to reduce its conservative theory to constant practice, and that probably nothing would avail to turn the Board from its sapping and mining policy, the majority of those present felt that they could no longer

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work must probably be applied. There are *the castes of India*, deeply and inveterately inwrought in the very texture of society, causing to the mass of the people hereditary and deep degradation, leading to the most inhuman and contemptuous feelings and conduct in social life, and presenting the most formidable barriers to every species of improvement. There are also *the unrestrained exactions*, made in the form of revenue, or of military or other service, connected with a species of feudalism, prevailing in many unenlightened communities, which are most unrighteous in their character and paralyzing in their influence, and cause unlimited distress to individuals and families. There are also *those various forms and degrees of oppression*, whether of laws or of usage, prevailing under the arbitrary governments which bear sway over the larger part of earth's surface."

"Should it be found, as the result of experience, that souls among the heathen are in fact regenerated by the Holy Spirit, before they are freed from all participation in these social and moral evils, and that convincing evidence can be given that they are so regenerated, then, may not the master and the slave, the ruler and the subject, giving such evidence of spiritual renovation, be all gathered into the same fold of Christ? And may they not all there and in this manner, under proper teaching, learn the great lesson, (so difficult for partially sanctified men to learn,) that in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, but that all are one in Him? And may they not, under these influences, have effectually nurtured in them those feelings of brotherly love, and that regard for each other's rights and welfare, in which alone is found the remedy for all such evils? Under such influences, may not the master be *prepared* to break the bonds of the slave, and *the oppressive ruler led* to dispense justice to the subject, and *the proud Brahmin* fraternally to embrace the man of low caste; and each to do it cheerfully, because it is humane and right, and because they *are all children of the great household of God?* By such influences, mainly, is not the great moral transformation to be wrought in the master and the ruler, in the bondman and the oppressed, all-important to both, and the only sure guaranty for permanent improvement in the social character and condition of either?"

The reader is asked to consider whether this passage does not savor strongly of those "half-covenant" doctrines which once infected many of the churches in New-England, and which led to the dismission of the elder President Edwards, who had resolutely withstood them.

fraternize with the Society, though they had fondly loved it, long prayed for it, and rejoiced in its success, as the veteran rejoices in the success of the leader he has followed through many long campaigns.*

The feeling thus estranged from the American Board, soon found opportunity to take distinct and working form. A local committee which had undertaken to send the gospel by the medium of the rescued Amistad captives to inner Africa; another committee, which was maintaining missions in Jamaica; and the Western Evangelical Missionary Society of Ohio, finding that their work could be accomplished by an extension of their plans, gave up their organizations, and accepted the invitation of the American Missionary Association to be merged in that Society, which had been recently formed by those who had expressed their views of Bible Missions in the Syracuse Convention.

Anxious to guard the great idea of Christian missions which they sought to incorporate into their new organization, assiduously as possible, the founders of the Association threw the gates of membership open to none who were not evangelical in their religious belief and moral in their conduct; and rejecting the close-corporation form, made the doings of the officers of the Association subject to the scrutiny and legislative action of the members.

Thus originated and thus constituted, the Association has been in the field seven years, and in that time has pushed its outposts to almost every quarter of the globe. It is represented by an effective force of Christian laborers in Siam, in the Sandwich Islands, in Africa, in Jamaica, among the Indians of the far North-west, the Chinese in California, the people of the destitute portions of the western and north-western States, and two of the slave States. Operating through a territory so wide, and tested under every variety of circumstances, the Society has had opportunity to determine whether the sapping and mining or the uncompromising is the better policy; and the friends of the cause surely have occasion to rejoice

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* Lest my recital of history should convey a wrong impression, I must here say: 1. That those who in the Syracuse Convention complained of the action of the Board, did not undertake to determine the *moral* intention of those who devised and executed the policy complained of. It was the policy itself to which they objected; and they evidently felt that if they were *sure* that the policy originated in a pure intention, they were not at liberty to uphold it. 2. That since the time the Board published its intention to pursue the conservative policy with regard to Missions in the East, of which complaint was made in the Syracuse Convention, it has in practice abandoned that policy, and set up churches for the enfolding of converts from the dead forms of the Greek and other oriental churches; but whether or not this change was brought about by the pressure of a disaffection with its course, which cost the Board the loss of at least one of its many excellent missionaries, is not for me to say.

that thus far no disposition on the part of the Association to accommodate itself either to organic iniquities or to private vices has come to light. May the day when the Society shall be complacent to evil that good may come, never be!

I cannot close my discourse without applying the subject I have endeavored to illustrate. 1. By charging my hearers to remember that duty to aid in Christianizing the world is not met simply by association with and labor in behalf of *some* missionary enterprise, but that the obligation to which I refer as imperatively demands alliance with the right kind of evangelizing agencies, as it requires any endeavor. This is so obviously an inference from the topics we have considered, that I need not illustrate or expand it. But let me press the point. Let me ask those who hear whether they look with careful and conscientious scrutiny to the *policy* of the evangelizing agencies with which they are connected? Do they see to it that the moral support of their sympathies and prayers, and the material aid of their contributions, withheld from institutions which, by temporizing, bring shame on the gospel, are given to agencies which, by aggressive and progressive fidelity to truth, dignify the gospel of Him who would not, even to save a world, concede to even a single sin? Say, friend, does the constraint of social relations, or habit, or thoughtlessness wed you to an organization, the policy of which savors of compromising rather than Christian honesty? or does truth so have its place in your affections, your principles, and your conduct, that you fraternize only that which, aiming to do God's work, aims also to do that work in God's way: the way of forbearance with what can be borne with, but of hostility to sin, which can never claim forbearance?

Ponder the question, brethren, for it may be that some who have not thought themselves wanting in the missionary *spirit* have yet need to commence the true evangelizing practice.

But let me apply my subject, 2. By calling on those who sustain the Association for which I speak, to keep steadily in view the great principles which should underlie the policy of an organization for the propagation of Christian truth; and to see to it that their Society, temperate, kind, and tolerant toward those who are not friends to it, and also toward the world it seeks to save, is yet *positively*, not by compulsion, but by loving, free choice, hostile to iniquity in all forms, to sins organic and to sins not organic, to public sins and to *private* sins.

But let me, in final application of my subject, remind my brethren of the Society, that it is not by public action only or chiefly that radical gospel institutions can be sustained. The instrumentalities which with meekness but with boldness, with gentleness but with fearless avowal of truth, do God's work in the right way, must be rooted in the steadfast

faith, devout prayers, and irreproachable lives of those who maintain them. In no other soil, not even in the fervor of fidelity of their representatives in the great field, can they find nutriment. Consider then, brethren, our obligation! Reflect, that if our secret purposes, our hidden affections, our private conduct, our state and standing in God's sight are contrary to truth, no public endeavors we can make will avail to the support of truly gospel missions.

How shall our brethren in Africa have the heart to stand unflinchingly before the strong-handed wrongs they witness, or how shall our missionaries in the territory of Southern slavery be nerved for their trying work, if only the money and resolutions of those who are themselves in practice temporizers, sustain them?

Let us carry the thought which this question cannot but awaken in our hearts, to our homes; and impelled by this momentous motive, let us do well our daily duty, and fill with a devotion which never tires of prayer, and with a labor for souls which is never weary, the measure of our obligation to our Maker and to man. And if such is our devotion, and such are our lives, then will not our missions represent in vain the truths we practise. They will succeed; and our home religion will send through them, insignificant though they may appear to human eyes, a fullness of blessing even to distant nations; as when with a tidal wave, which hardly ripples on the surface of the deep, the swelling flood of ocean fills with its affluence every depression of the indented shore.

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THE

ANNUAL DISCOURSE

PREACHED BEFORE THE

AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION,

IN THE

FIRST PARISH CHURCH, BANGOR, ME.,

SEPTEMBER 29, 1852.

BY

REV. JAMES B. WALKER,
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SERMON.

1 John iv. 20.

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

After brief preliminary remarks, I shall endeavor to develop and illustrate the principles contained in this passage, and then apply them as tests of character and duty in the missionary work.

The utterances of love by the other disciples become almost manifestations of love in John. With him the sacrifice of Christ is the manifestation of Divine love *for* us, and the producing cause of Divine love *in* us. *Truth is light*, but love is life with John—it is divine life—nay more, it is the *only* divine life: "for he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love." We may know *of* God in the precept, but we can know him in experience and in spirit only by that love which is produced by faith in Christ, and which purifies the heart.

John's faith, like Paul's, appropriates Christ, not only in his death, but likewise in his life. With them faith works by love, and love works by labor. Says the apostle to the Gentiles, "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again." Says John, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him; he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk as he walked." So in the immediate contexts: "We love him because he first loved us;" and, "This commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also."

In the exposition and application of this passage, we will notice first the principle, with the reason annexed, as stated in the text: "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

2. Notice in several particulars the spirit and the practice which love to God and man, in Christ, will develop in the lives of believers.

3. We will apply the specific truth of the passage to missionary organizations, and to the duty of promoting free missions in particular.

1. Assent to the character of God and the obligation of the Divine law, in the abstract, is a different thing from faith in God and in his law revealed in their relations to us.

There are many who will assent to a correct statement of the character of God, and to a correct exhibition of his law. But there is a vital difference between knowing *of* God, in the abstract idea, and knowing him in his living developed character; between knowing him in *speculation* and in *experience;* between faith in God in a creed, and faith in God in Christ. The existence of a true knowledge of God in Christ does not imply the absence of a knowledge *of* God in the dogmatic or creed form. An intellectual apprehension of truth is a prerequisite to its impression upon our moral nature; but intellectual apprehension and assent alone produce neither love to God nor good-will to men. The history of the Church in all ages furnishes manifold and mournful illustrations of the truth of this statement.

The Jews had, in most respects, an accurate conception of the character of God. They knew, in a speculative sense, "whom they worshipped." Their rabbis, or doctors of divinity, taught the fundamental principles of the law of God; and yet their conduct was not conformed to the law, and their hearts were opposed to the true character of that God in whom they professed to believe, and in whom, as an abstract idea, they did believe. We need not to inquire now concerning the constructions and traditions by which they made void the law, while at the same time they professed to reverence and obey it. Jesus constantly affirmed of them, what their conduct exhibited, (although few men in that age would recognize the fact,) that they were those who, professing to love and obey God whom they had not seen, yet hated their fellow-men whom they had seen.

The incarnation of God in Christ proved that men may *know* the abstract idea of the true God, while they are absolutely hostile to that same God acting upon them and enjoining the duties which his character and his law requires. The Godhead was embodied in Christ, and through him the holy attributes of the Divine nature came into actual contact with the minds of the Jews. Christ was God acting, and requiring men to act in their proper relations, and discharge their proper duties. The same character revealed in their Scriptures—the same conduct which the Divine law requires, was exhibited in the life-action of Jesus Christ. The unseen God, in whose WORD they professed to believe, became concrete, as the WORD among the Jews. He stood in their midst. His holy attributes

acted upon them. His Divine nature spoke to them. He required nothing more of them than what they taught the law required all men to do—to worship God with a true heart, and obey, *in life*, the Divine law, which required that they should do unto others as they would have others do unto them.

But mark the result when God in Christ approached, and *required them to do* what reason and the law of God taught them they ought to do. He took their own words as to the character of God. He took their own definition as to the requirements of the Divine law. All he did in this respect was to require that they should, without regard to human opinions and prejudices, worship God in faith and humility, and *do*, not in word, but *in spirit and in life*, the things which the Divine law required.

Now, in whatever sense the Jews *knew* God, it is certain that they did not *love* him living and acting in relation to them. If they had loved the true character of the unseen God, they would have rejoiced in spirit when the conception which they loved was embodied, and approached them in Christ. If they had loved the true law, they would have rejoiced and obeyed when it was illustrated and enforced. In the person of Jesus, God and the law lived and acted in relation to them, and required them to live and act *for truth* and *against sin*. But these men, professing to know and obey God, met Jesus with contradiction—with contempt—with persecution unto death. So the Redeemer said they would requite his followers, and so they did requite them. "If," said the Saviour, "they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, much more them of his household." As it was in the days of Christ, so it is now, and so it will be until truth triumphs over all the evils in the Church and in the world: men will perceive the truth and assent to it, while they, at the same time, will reject its applications, and resist those who enjoin obedience to its spirit and its precepts.

The Jews, in the days of Christ's manifestation, reverenced the prophets, and built sepulchres over the ashes of the faithful men whom their fathers had slain. The truth uttered in past ages, and uttered to other men, they recognized as sacred and obligatory. But the men of their own age, who manifested the spirit of the prophets, and rebuked the same sins in themselves which had been denounced in their fathers—those men who embodied the principles of the old prophets, they persecuted to death. Well did Jesus say of those tomb-builders, that they in spirit allowed the deeds of their fathers, and that when he should send them prophets and apostles to reprove them for their sins, they would slay them as their fathers had slain the older prophets.

So it is in every age. There are those who will assent to truth in the

abstract, while they reject it in life and action. They worship it in the past, but repudiate it in the present. I am no politician, and I make the reference only for conscience' sake, and to illustrate my subject: Suppose Gen. Washington could live again under some other name; suppose Thomas Jefferson were manifested in this age of the Republic in the person of some other man; and suppose they should utter the sentiments now that they uttered while they lived. Washington said, in a letter to Thomas Morris: "There is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do to see a plan adopted for the abolition of slavery: this can be accomplished only by legislative authority; and this, as far as my suffrage will go, shall not be wanting." Washington desired the abolition of slavery, and proposed to *vote* for its accomplishment, and when he died, emancipated all the slaves over whom he had any legal control. Jefferson, in his "Notes on Virginia," after setting forth the effects of slavery as most baneful, both upon the slave and his master, and upon the Republic, said: "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and that his justice cannot sleep for ever."—"When the tears of the slaves shall have involved heaven itself in darkness, doubtless a God of justice will awaken to their distress." Now, what I want to say is this—and I appeal to the knowledge and the conscience of you all whether I speak the truth: If Washington and Jefferson were now living, under other names, and if they uttered the same sentiments now which they uttered then, they would be maligned and persecuted by men of the present generation who yet profess to honor their principles. They could receive neither nomination nor appointment to any office connected with the government of that country whose Declaration of Independence the one wrote and the other maintained. Men now build their tombs and laud their characters; but if they were alive in this age to maintain their principles against the sentiments of this degenerate generation, many of these unprincipled tomb-builders would discard and persecute them.

"I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say." The principle, I think, is apparent. If we profess to love God and truth, while, at the same time, we refuse to espouse the truth, and reject those who require us to practise it, we deceive ourselves and others; and the day of judgment will disclose that we possess the same character, and belong to the same class, with the men reproved in the days of Christ. On this ground Jesus condemned the Pharisees of his *own day*, and will condemn the Pharisees of all ages in the last day. He said to them, "Ye have neither heard the Father's voice at any time, nor seen his shape, and ye have not his word abiding in you; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not."—"I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you."

A second development of this principle, and one which brings us directly

to the particular truth contained in the text, is—*that he that does not love man does not love God.* John says to professed believers, in the text, "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar."

This statement is unspeakably important in our times. We will put it in the affirmative form, and endeavor to exhibit its application to Christian character and duty.

Notice the foundation principles upon which this statement rests. John assumes that Christ was the true God and eternal life; that while "no man had seen God at any time, the only-begotton Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Christ was both God and man to John; not a mixed nature, as a certain Doctor of Divinity has recently taught, but distinctively, as we believe, God and man. In him GOD WAS MANIFESTED AS HE IS, AND MAN WAS MANIFESTED AS HE SHOULD BE. Our race had lost the knowledge of the *true man*, as certainly, and as hopelessly, as they had lost the knowledge of the *true God.* By faith in Christ, *we believe both in the true God and the true man* AT THE SAME TIME. He, therefore, who loves Christ, loves both God and man, in him. *Faith in Christ works by love to man as he should be*, and *love to Christ works by labor to make man what he should be.*

Now if we love the true humanity in Christ, we shall love it every where. Humanity in Christ is generic. It is the second Adam—the impersonation of man as God created him—the true soul, faculties and susceptibilities of the being, MAN.

GOD and MAN being thus united in Christ, it is not possible to love God in Christ without loving man at the same time. He, therefore, who says, I love God, and hateth his brother, is a liar. For his brother that he hath seen is, in his nature, although marred in faculties, a living type of the humanity of Jesus, whom he hath not seen. The true humanity is a finite moral image of the infinite God. In kind, but not in degree, the moral nature of the Divine and human are the same. He, therefore, who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, can neither love the true God, nor the true man in Christ, whom he hath not seen.

2. Having thus set forth the principles declared in the text, we shall now proceed, briefly, to show what fruits true love to Christ will develop in the lives of believers.

No one doubts that love to Christ is the true motive power of the gospel. This is assented to by all Christians, and by all benevolent societies, that aim to enlighten and save men. At the recent meeting of the American Board at Troy, love to Christ, as a first and essential motive in the missionary work, was especially insisted upon, by the able preacher for the present year. We assume, then, that the motive

power in all true gospel effort is love to Jesus. But in this age, as in all other ages, we fear many deceive themselves concerning the qualities and the development of love to Christ in the soul. We shall now endeavor to point out some of its Scriptural and unfailing characteristics.

(*a.*) *Love to Christ produces labor to make others like Christ.* The character of Jesus is the standard to which the believer aspires, and to which he will labor to bring others. In its bearing upon efforts to evangelize the world, this influence of Christian love is worthy of marked consideration. It is love to Christ that makes HIM the model to which Christians endeavor to elevate others. There are various classes of philanthropists, some out of the churches and some in them, who no doubt are sincerely endeavoring to benefit their fellow-men. Now, whatever character is the model of excellence with any class of men, they will endeavor to mould others into that model. Love will necessarily produce this effect. *If we love those for whom we labor, we will labor that they may be like those whom we love.* A man whose ideal of excellence is some distinguished politician in Church or State will desire, most of all, that his son, or those he loves best, should be like that model. A man whose model is a successful merchant, will seek for his son the same qualifications. So every one will seek to conform others to the model of character which they love best, and which is to them within the limit of attainment. So there are ideal conditions in which men seek the happiness of society. Some would have all in communities, seeking their chief good in equal worldly condition. Other philanthropists seek the highest good of men in some new arrangement of the social economy. The standards of the best human condition are as various among philanthropists now who are not believers in Christ, as they were in the days of the Grecian sages, of whom Varro says, they sought the "greatest good" in one hundred and fifty different conditions. Men who have not supreme love for Christ do not realize the fact, that after all earthly evils are removed the greatest good of humanity is not yet attained. We admit that

> "'Tis noble to maintain the right,
> To aid the weak against the strong,
> To stand with angels in the fight
> Of love and truth against the wrong."

But while Christians may well admire philanthropy in its temporal aspects, and grieve often to see it misdirected, they know that happiness is *subjective*, not *objective*. It depends not on external things, but on an internal condition of the soul. You might raise a suffering mendicant to the highest social position, while his happiness would be less and his influence worse. Man's highest good consists in that state of mind in which his actions are prompted by love. To bring men into the condi-

tion of love, so that they will *act in accordance with the law of love*, is to accomplish the greatest good of humanity. Now, *Jesus Christ is the model of this condition both in* CHARACTER *and in action;* hence, love to Christ is the only impulse that both *moves* and *guides* the soul in right action for the good of men.

Do we then discard the efforts of those who, without faith in Christ, labor for the good of men? By no means; we neither discard nor discredit such efforts. One of the highest instincts of living beings is sympathy with the wronged and the suffering. Even in the orders of creation below man the cry of distress will arouse creatures of the same species and bring them to the rescue of the suffering one. The philanthropist who obeys the highest instinct of our nature, and rallies to the rescue of the wronged, is a prince compared with those who, while they profess o love Christ, deny by their conduct both the higher instincts of humanity and the holier instincts of divine love in the soul. Love of the true Christ gives divine life to the natural instinct, and guides to the attainment of the highest good of men.

(*b.*) I will notice a second characteristic development of love to Christ. It leads those who possess it to oppose *every thing* which injures man. True Christians love man for the sake of his nature—his true nature as revealed in Christ. It is the love of humanity—not the love of some single attribute or condition of humanity. The love of humanity in itself considered—not one race or class of the human family. An individual who loves man, as man, will oppose every thing that degrades his character, abates his happiness, or impairs his rights. A Christian father loves his son. That son is beset by several evils. One man aims to make him intemperate; the father will oppose him. Another aims to make him a slave; the father will oppose him. Another endeavors to keep him in ignorance; the father will oppose him. *And the opposition of the father will be strong in proportion to the evil inflicted on his child.* This is the very nature of love. A father who loves his child *cannot do otherwise* than oppose every thing that injures that child in person or in spirit. And not only this, but he will do so in regard to all his children. If he feels thus towards one and not towards others, he has lost the instincts of a father's heart. If he is very hostile to one influence that would injure his son, while he is willing he should be injured by some other evil, he is a monster and not a father. It is the nature and development of love to oppose every thing that injures loved objects. So with love to Christ. Humanity is loved in Christ as a nature. The Christian will therefore oppose every thing that mars the attributes or defiles the susceptibilities of that nature. A man who has love to Christ in his heart cannot be opposed to war while he tolerates slavery. He cannot be opposed to slavery while he tolerates intemper-

ance. He cannot seek to promote man's spiritual interests while he is willing he should suffer temporal injuries. Such a perverted character is never formed under the influence of the love of Christ. The Rabbies and Pharisees, who sought heaven from selfish motives, and who labored to promote spiritual ends as a sect opposed to the Sadducees, could love certain classes of men, while they neglected or hated others; and such men can do so in every age. But he that loves the true man in Christ Jesus, will, in its measure, oppose every thing that injures the interests or the character of any human being. Although the image is marred by sin, yet every man bears the nature of the humanity which the Christian loves in Christ Jesus.

One thing further under this division of the subject: Love to Christ will not only oppose, but it will cast out the transgressor that is injuring others, and that refuses to be reclaimed. If a mother has a family of daughters, and one of them become vicious, when the defection is discovered she will reprove her erring child, and require immediate repentance and a return to virtue. If that daughter will not be reclaimed, but continues in vice, while at the same time she is influencing her sisters to crime, that mother, while she sorrows and prays for her unworthy child, will remove her from the family. She would do this because she loved virtue, and because she loved her other children. If she treated that daughter as she did the virtuous children in the family, if she overlooked the influence the sinning one was exercising to corrupt the others, such a mother would be an apostate from virtue, and regardless of parental obligation.

To such action the love of Christ prompts the Christian. When sin is in the church—sin, which perverts the truth of the gospel, and corrupts the hearts of professing Christians—the love of Christ will expel it; or, if this is not attainable, it will separate Christians from the contagion. Such is the nature of Christian love. It produces effort to remove all evil from men, or to remove them from the evil. Wherever true love to Christ exists, this is one of its certain developments.

(c.) *Love to man as exhibited in Christ leads Christians to labor* FIRST *and* MOST *for those who most need sympathy and effort.* This is so plain a characteristic of divine love in the soul, that we are sometimes astonished that men should profess to be Christians who do not discover in themselves this element of Christian character. But we need not be astonished. The human heart is deceitful and selfish. To approve the right, and to suppose ourselves in the right, while love of self or of sect, instead of love to man, prompts our efforts, is a delusion not less common now than it was in the days of Christ. To correct this state of self-deception, the Saviour presented truth in more striking forms, and re-

peated it more frequently, than he has done in relation to any other evil to which the human soul is subject.

When the disciples of John came, in their master's name, to inquire whether Jesus were the Messiah, He replied, Go and tell John that I bestow *temporal* benefits first on those who are the most needy—the poor, the sick, the blind; and so I do *spiritually*—"the poor have the gospel preached unto them." John knew the marks of the Messiah. The answer settled the question.

A Jew professing to love God, and who assented to the sum of the Divine law, asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" In answer, we have striking parable of the man who fell among thieves. Some who professed to teach the prevailing religion in its most stringent forms, passed by the helpless sufferer; while relief was granted by one whom the Pharisees of those days supposed to be an alien from true faith, and who was not probably so orthodox in theory as themselves. Yet Christ approved the conduct of this man as neighbor to the one in need, and commanded the inquirer to go and do likewise.

Superadded, we have the parables of the lost sheep and the lost piece of money. The true shepherd will leave the ninety and nine who are in less danger, and free from suffering, and go to succor the one who is exposed to the wolf and other beasts of prey. The import of this teaching cannot be doubted. That alone is true love to Christ which proproduces labor *first* and *most* for those who need most.

Suppose a mother has a family of children: She loves all her offspring alike; but one is suffering and in danger, and needs her assistance more than others. What will that mother do? Will she stop and minister to the others, while she neglects the suffering one? *Not if she has a mother's heart.* A mother will leave those who need her care less, and go to succor and befriend the more needy. *You know she will! Love can do nothing else.* If we have the love of Christ for man in our hearts, the moment one class needs labor and sympathy more than another, Christian love directs effort to that class of men more than to the less needy. This is the nature of love, both human and Divine. It is exemplified and illustrated in the life of the Son of God, and by all the apostles and evangelists and martyrs of the primitive Church. The voice of inspiration, and the influence of the Divine Spirit in the heart, teach this doctrine. Its truth is beyond all controversy. Those, therefore, who profess to labor for the less needy, while they neglect those in more need, are recreant both to human and Divine love. With the true Christian, love rises and urges in proportion to the wrongs and helplessness of men. *Such you know is the love of Christ.* It needs not to be argued with the Christian heart. Jesus left the bosom of the Father, he left the adoring

presence of angel spirits, and came *to seek and to save those who were lost.* We were slaves to the world and the devil, and he gave himself to crucifixion for us. And when on earth, those who needed most were those whom he first and most befriended. "*Beginning at Jerusalem.*"

These are *scriptural* and *certain marks* of Christ's love in the soul. The Saviour of sinners identifies himself with the destitute and wronged and suffering ones of our race, and receives *benefits conferred upon them as being conferred upon his own person.* And blessed are they who shall stand when Christ shall say, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." But woe be to those who pass by the degraded and wronged, to those who say, Lord! Lord! while they are destitute of the love of Christ for his little ones! Upon such the fearful and final sentence is pronounced: "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me: depart."

May God, by his Holy Spirit, grant us *that* love of Christ which will save us from such a doom.

APPLICATION.

It may be said truly that these principles apply equally to all Christian effort, and to all benevolent enterprises; and in this connection we are asked, why then do we not expend our efforts through the older missionary organizations, instead of forming new ones to labor for the accomplishment of the same ends? The question is apposite, and I shall endeavor to answer.

It is incumbent upon us to give reasons for our efforts to some who inquire. Many feel, as we think all should, that it is not only the privilege but the duty of all Christian people to send their money through any organization they may choose; and that they should examine and send their aid through that society which is established upon principles most in accordance with the gospel. The older societies being in existence, the formation of others does imply that many Christian people think their principles are in some respects defective, or new ones would not be established. With me this is true; and it is due to every one who has any interest in the missionary work, that an answer should be given why we deem it the duty of Christians, while they hear and respect other missionary organizations, to contribute their funds through free missionary societies.

The reasons for the free missionary organizations lie in the principle and action of the older Boards.

The American Board receives slaveholders into mission churches. They propagate a Christianity which, in the eyes of all men who know their principles, recognizes slaveholding as consistent with the gospel of

Jesus Christ. They send misssonaries to the Indians. They find there two classes of heathen, the red man and the black; often about the same in color, and always of about equal intelligence. Now what do the missionaries of the Board do in such circumstances? "They recognize those as Christians who enslave others, contrary to all the principles of justice and mercy. The Christianity they establish among the Indians leads them to believe that slavery is in accordance with the principles of the gospel of Christ. The missionaries make the standard by which the Indian who accepts it must judge of the character of Christ, and of their duties to men. The light of nature would teach the Indian that slavery was wrong, while the missionaries by taking it into the church teach them that it is right. This reception of slavery into the mission churches not only corrupts the conscience of the Indians, but it corrupts the conscience of Christians at home. Those who continue to support the old Boards must apologize for or defend the connection of slavery with their missions. If Christians will apologize for slavery in connection with the Church, they will learn to do so in connection with the State. Their conscience will be defiled in regard to the corrupting influences of slavery every where.

Thus it seems to me there can be no doubt about the fact that the missions of the American Board are dishonoring the gospel, and propagating, by the money of the benevolent, a slaveholding Christianity among the Indians. At the same time, they are corrupting the Church at home.

It is due to this influential Society to say that they will not propagate slavery with the gospel in other nations except our own country. In Africa they will not receive a black slaveholder until he emancipates his slaves. This very fact shows that they recognize their principles as wrong, and that the slave power in this country has either intimidated or corrupted them. All further action on the subject, and even all further discussion, is discountenanced and resisted. They publish their approval of the Indian missions as they are, and have rigidly enforced a finality of discussion and action in all meetings of the Board, and speak of their meetings as peaceful and spiritual when this enormous evil in which they are involved is not referred to.

It is sometimes said, by good people who have not attended to the history of this evil as it has strengthened and confirmed itself in the American Board, that the Board will in the end cease to propagate a slaveholding gospel. Such persons do not remember that both the Board and their missionaries have reached a finality upon this subject. Sin does not exhaust itself, but strengthens itself wherever it is tolerated. If the gospel which missionary boards proclaim tolerates it, *what can condemn or remove it?*

The missionaries where slavery is sanctified by baptizing it into the churches say, "Nor can we ever make it a test of piety or a condition of admission to the privileges of the church, that a candidate should express a determination not to live and die a slaveholder."

In relation to buying and selling their fellow-beings, and even in relation to the crime of selling children from their parents, the missionaries of the Board do not consider, such crimes, if they should occur, as disciplinable offenses. They say, "In relation to the separation of parents and children, we must first remark that it is one of those things which are not forbidden by express injunction of the Scriptures. It is impossible in our circumstances to make it a general rule, that the separation of parents and children by sale and purchase shall be regarded as a disciplinable offense."

First they say it is one of those things which are not forbidden by express injunction of the Scriptures. How dreadful this is! It is one of the ten commandments: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's." Yet these missionaries teach that a man may not only covet, but take and sell his neighbor's wife and child, and they know no injunction of the Bible against it. Merciful God! what evil sin, cherished, will work in churches and mission boards, and even in the minds of missionaries themselves! Letters have been subsequently drawn from them that mitigate the enormity of this abuse, but nothing that changes their position.

The missionaries say likewise that their doctrine and practice have reached a finality with them as well as with the Board. They write, "We earnestly hope that what we have written may be taken as a final exposition of our sentiments—a defining of our position." They say again, "It may be deemed our duty by some to adopt a train of measures that shall aim in their object directly to countervail the whole system, and in the end undermine the entire fabric which human legislation has framed in regard to slavery. *We do not feel that we are required to adopt any such course, nor do we regard this as our work.*"

Such are the principles upon which the missionary work is conducted by the American Board among the Indians, and by the Home Missionary Board in slave States. We do not hesitate to say that such principles, instead of being the principles of the gospel of Christ, are in direct conflict both with the nature and design of the gospel. We say this here to vindicate ourselves, and to remonstrate with our brethren.

A free missionary society, both for home and foreign missions, is now formed upon what we believe to be gospel principles. That it is right to propagate the gospel without slavery we think none can doubt. That it

is right to propagate it with slavery some believe. Each Christian has the opportunity to maintain whichever of the two principles his heart and conscience approve. We state the case as we believe Christ would have us do, and leave the results with God, and the responsibilities with each individual Christian.

STATISTICAL HISTORY

OF

BENEVOLENT CONTRIBUTIONS

IN THE

PAST SIXTEEN YEARS.

FOR THE USE OF THE

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS,

SEPTEMBER, 1852.

PREPARED BY ONE OF THE SECRETARIES.

BOSTON:

PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN, 42 CONGRESS STREET.

1852.

STATISTICAL HISTORY

OF

BENEVOLENT CONTRIBUTIONS

IN THE

PAST SIXTEEN YEARS.

Are Foreign and Home Missions advancing in this country?

Some have supposed, that the receipts of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions have been stationary, the past ten years. Has it been so, on the whole?

The Missionary Spirit first put itself forth effectively in *Foreign* missions, and the tide of contributions seemed, for a time, to flow chiefly in that direction. Do our *Home* missions now receive their share of support?

These, with other kindred inquiries, can be answered only by means of statistical investigations. To furnish the facts for a *full* and *perfect* reply to the third of the above inquiries, would require the investigation to be pushed farther than comports with our time, if not with our sources of information. Such an extended inquiry, however, is not needful to the object we have in view, as will appear in the sequel.

It is not an easy matter, in respect to *all* the Societies that are to pass under review, to say precisely what have been their annual receipts during every one of the past sixteen or twenty years; nor is it quite possible to say, in respect to some of them, what portion of

their outlay is properly chargeable to foreign objects, and what to home objects. Where there was no way but to conjecture, we have done the best we could. In stating the receipts of one of the Societies, it has been necessary, for obvious reasons, to deduct the grants of our National Government and of Bible and Tract Societies. In one instance we found, that the table we had compiled from the treasurer's accounts did not, for some reason, correspond exactly with a list of receipts for a course of years we subsequently found in the body of one of the Annual Reports. It seemed proper to correct our table by the Report.

It may perhaps be possible to detect not a few errors in the tables; though not enough, it is believed, even in the aggregate, to affect the value of the results. There may be errors of judgment, in determining what were the actual receipts to be reckoned in such an investigation; errors in the transfer of numbers to paper; errors in copying; errors in the arithmetical calculations; and some errors in the press. The author of these tables could not give himself exclusively to the business, except in numerous short portions of time. They were a small part of his share in the laborious preparation incumbent on the Secretaries of the Board for the Annual Meeting. Should others be incited to revise these tables, and do the work more effectively, he will still feel that his labor has not been in vain.

The object of the investigation—what in fact impelled to it—not only did not require that contributions from Religious Denominations with which the American Board has no immediate connection, should be reckoned, but it required that they should not be reckoned. The object was to ascertain wherefore the receipts of the Board have increased no faster during the last ten or twelve years, and what is the prospect in future. The careful and reflecting observer will be able to see that, whatever the retarding influences were, they are not such as bear unfavorably on the present prospects of Missions, whether Foreign, or Domestic.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

I. *Receipts of the Board.*

The receipts of each year are given; the receipts in each period of four years; the increase in those periods respectively; the average annual receipts for each of the periods; and the increase (decrease in one instance) in the average annual receipts of each period.

Years.	Periods.	Receipts.	Periods of 4 years.	Increase.	Av. Ann. Receipts.	Increase.
1811,		$999 52				
1812,		13,611 50				
1813,		11,361 18				
1814,		12,265 56				
1815,		9,493 89				
	1.		$46,732 13		11,683	10,684
1816,		12,501 03				
1817,		29,948 63				
1818,		34,727 72				
1819,		37,520 63				
	2.		114,698 01	67,966	28,674	16,991
1820,		39,949 45				
1821,		46,354 95				
1822,		60,087 87				
1823,		55,758 94				
	3.		202,151 21	87,413	50,537	21,863
1824,		47,483 58				
1825,		55,716 18				
1826,		61,616 25				
1827,		88,341 89				
	4.		253,157 90	51,006	63,289	12,752
1828,		102,009 64				
1829,		106,928 26				
1830,		83,019 37				
1831,		100,934 09				
	5.		392,891 36	39,734	98,222	34,933
1832,		130,574 12				
1833,		145,847 77				
1834,		152,386 10				
1835,		163,340 19				
	6.		592,148 18	199,257	148,037	49,815
1836,		176,232 15				
1837,		252,076 55				
1838,		236,170 98				
1839,		244,169 82				
	7.		908,649 50	316,501	227,162	79,125
1840,		241,691 04				
1841,		235,189 30				
1842,		318,396 53				
1843,		244,254 43				
	8.		1,039,531 30	130,882	259,882	32,720
1844,		236,394 37				
1845,		255,112 96				
1846,		262,073 55				
1847,		211,402 76				
	9.		964,983 64	*74 547	241,245	*18,637
1848,		254,056 46				
1849,		291,705 27				
1850,		251,862 28				
1851,		274,902 21				
	10.		1,072,526 22	107,543	268,131	26,886
1852,		301,732 70.				

* Less than in the preceding period.

II. *Expenditures of the Board.*

Year.	Periods.	Expenditures.	Periods.	Increase.	Av. Ann. Expenditure.	Increase.
1811,						
1812,		$9,699				
1813,		8,611				
1814,		7,078				
1815,		5,027				
	1.	———	$30,415		7,603	
1816,		15,934				
1817,		20,485				
1818,		36,346				
1819,		40,337				
	2.	———	113,102	82,687	28,275	20,672
1820,		57,621				
1821,		46,771				
1822,		60,474				
1823,		66,380				
	3.	———	231,246	118,144	57,811	29,536
1824,		54,157				
1825,		41,469				
1826,		59,012				
1827,		103,430				
	4.	———	258,068	26,822	64,517	6,706
1828,		107,676				
1829,		92,533				
1830,		84,798				
1831,		98,313				
	5.	———	383,320	125,252	95,830	31,313
1832,		120,954				
1833,		149,906				
1834,		159,779				
1835,		163,254				
	6.	———	593,893	210,573	148,473	117,160
1836,		210,407				
1837,		254,589				
1838,		230,642				
1839,		227,491				
	7.	———	923,129	329,236	230,782	82,309
1840,		246,601				
1841,		268,914				
1842,		261,147				
1843,		256,687				
	8.	———	1,033,349	110,220	258,337	27,555
1844,		244,371				
1845,		216,817				
1846,		257,605				
1847,		264,783				
	9.	———	983,576	*49,773	245,894	*12,443
1848,		282,330				
1849,		263,418				
1850,		254,329				
1851,		284,830				
	10.	———	1,084,907	101,331	471,256	25,362
1852,		257,727				

* Less than in the preceding period.

III. *Comparative View of the Board's Receipts and Expenditures.*

Periods.	Receipts.	Expenditures.	Excess.
1811,	$ 999		*999
1812—15,	46,732	30,415	*16,317
1816—19,	114,698	113,102	*1,596
1820—23,	202,151	231,246	29,095
1824—27,	253,157	258,068	4,911
1828—31,	392,891	383,320	*9,571
1832—35,	592,148	593,893	1,745
1836—39,	908,649	923,129	14,480
1840—43,	1,039,531	1,033,349	*6,182
1844—47,	964,983	983,576	18,593
1848—51,	1,072,526	1,084,907	12,381
Total,	$5,588,465	$5,635,005	$81,205
*Excess of Receipts,			34,655
Excess of Expenditures in forty years,			$46,540

IV. *Receipts of the Board from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York, derived from the supplementary statement to the Treasurer's Accounts.*

(Only what came through Auxiliaries.)

Year.	Massachusetts.	Connecticut.	New York.
1832,	$26,007	16,930	18,255
1833,	25,487	17,203	25,844
1834,	28,511	17,398	22,388
1835,	28,685	17,509	24,559
1836,	28,154	19,445	24,983
1837,	37,541	28,119	37,385
1838,	38,213	38,526	30,610
1839,	33,113	31,730	32,969
1840,	53,847	34,724	28,613
1841,	53,838	33,359	32,298
1842,	71,106	42,806	35,812
1843,	59,546	35,076	30,874
1844,	59,854	30,504	28,354
1845,	64,635	33,227	29,555
1846,	52,548	29,379	22,493
1847,	52,421	27,370	27,596
(The whole amount of donations.)			
1848,	71,459	39,488	*53,703
1849,	91,874	42,294	70,534
1850,	76,069	39,630	50,569
1851,	77,280	38,534	60,800

SUMMARY.

Periods.	Massachusetts.	Connecticut.	New York.
1832—35,	$108.690	69,040	91,036
1836—39,	137,021	117,920	125,947
1840—43,	238,347	145,965	127,527
1844—47,	269,458	121,480	107,998
1848—51,	316,682	159,946	*235,606
Total,	1,070,198	614,351	688,114
	Increase.		
Period 2d,	$28,331	48,880	34,911
" 3d,	101,326	28,045	1,580
" 4th,	31,111	†24,485	†19,529
" 5th,	47,224	38,466	*127,608

* A considerable portion of the receipts from New York State do not come through Auxiliaries.
† Less than in the preceding period.

V. *Receipts of the Board from the Western States, in each of the last four years.*

Year.	Ohio.	Indiana.	Illinois.	Michigan.	Wisconsin.	Iowa.	Missouri.	Ark.	Kentucky.	Tenn.
1848,	10,562	1,030	3,265	3,290	808	161	1,112	65	259	1,266
1849,	10,718	1,910	3,205	2,632	1,066	375	811		84	884
1850,	11,393	1,404	2,767	2,300	703	217	846		124	1,035
1851,	11,905	1,961	3,591	2,119	927	331	303		127	641
Total,	44,578	6,305	12,828	10,341	3,504	1,084	3,072	65	594	3,826

VI. *Increase of the Receipts of the Board from New England and New York, in the last twenty years.*

Certain Districts are selected, in each of the States, which may serve as the basis of the rate of increase on the whole. Of course it will be only an approximation.

Year.	Cumberland Co., Me.	Hillsboro' Co., N. H.	Rutland Co., Vt.	Berkshire Co., Ms.
1832,	$943	1,847	936	1,967
1833,	1,226	1,783	743	1,970
1834,	1,232	1,759	828	1,667
1835,	1,242	1,856	612	1,612
	——4,643	——7,245	——3,119	——7,216
1836,	769	1,699	721	1,691
1837,	2,068	1,991	1,519	1,404
1838,	2,289	2,167	1,366	1,833
1839,	2,211	2,129	1,350	2,317
	——7,337	——7,986	——4,956	——7,245
1840,	2,715	2,788	1,754	1,009
1841,	2,072	3,038	1,915	4,758
1842,	4,016	3,416	2,781	2,879
1843,	1,813	2,882	1,545	2,220
	——10,616	——12,124	——7,995	——10,866
1844,	2,129	2,971	1,607	3,121
1845,	2,177	2,792	1,650	2,621
1846,	2,013	2,144	1,501	2,072
1847,	1,893	2,195	1,378	2,523
	——8,212	——10,102	——6,136	——10,337
1848,	2,491	2,366	1,697	3,829
1849,	1,935	3,223	1,513	2,275
1850,	2,507	2,644	1,690	2,990
1851,	2,382	2,295	1,346	2,595
	——9,315	——10,528	——6,246	——11,689

Year.	Brookfield Asso., Ms.	Worc'r Central, Ms.	Boston, Ms.	Hartford Co., Ct.	Windham Co., Ct.
1832,	$1,298	1,761	7,446	3,807	1,143
1833,	1,382	1,814	8,141	4,649	1,074
1834,	1,578	2,023	9,338	4,175	1,171
1835,	1,461	2,081	8,611	4,293	1,061
	——5,719	——7,679	——33,536	——16,924	——4,449
1836,	1,530	2,055	8,343	3,940	1,357
1837,	2,433	3,192	13,129	6,316	1,471
1838,	2,711	4,275	8,842	11,882	2,208
1839,	2,762	3,576	7,571	8,156	2,562
	——9,436	——13,098	——37,885	——30,294	——7,598
1840,	2,619	4,816	12,179	7,056	2,393
1841,	2,759	3,927	14,143	8,877	2,737
1842,	2,884	5,588	18,479	9,284	3,449
1843,	2,557	4,480	16,921	9,389	2,622
	——10,819	——18,811	——61,722	——34,606	——11,201
1844,	3,298	4,148	15,630	5,934	2,464
1845,	4,004	7,599	15,393	7,105	2,533
1846,	3,164	4,155	14,105	6,727	2,264
1847,	2,718	4,120	15,913	5,771	2,166
	——13,184	——20,022	——61,041	——25,537	——9,427
1848,	3,302	4,464	13,795	7,587	2,525
1849,	3,245	5,584	22,122	9,252	2,932
1850,	4,295	5,127	17,537	6,234	2,105
1851,	3,486	4,618	19,127	6,743	2,167
	——14,328	——19,793	——72,581	——29,816	——9,729

Year.	N. Y. City & Brooklyn.	Geneva & Vic. N. Y.	Monroe Co. N. Y.	Oneida Co. N. Y.	Buffalo and Vic.
1832,	$9,984		2,025	4,211	
1833,	14,044		1,640	5,498	
1834,	7,637		2,685	3,710	
1835,	13,401		1,876	4,537	
	——45,066		——8,226	——17,956	
1836,	12,164	2,147	3,269	2,724	
1837,	17,107	4,911	3,915	4,282	542
1838,	11,234	7,693	3,453	3,123	338
1839,	13,769	8,531	3,301	2,956	690
	——54,274	——23,282	——14,938	——13,085	——1,570
1840,	11,132	6,719	2,978	2,899	501
1841,	12,447	9,337	2,509	2,935	972
1842,	15,301	7,942	2,999	2,226	1,402
1843,	13,390	7,172	3,858	2,042	678
	——52,270	——31,170	——12,344	——10,102	——3,553
1844,	10,923	6,428	3,608	1,778	1,306
1845,	11,885	6,167	3,373	2,112	787
1846,	7,974	4,977	1,960	1,776	1,063
1847,	13,807	4,251	3,196	1,895	762
	——44,589	——21,803	——12,137	——7,561	——3,918
1848,	11,598	4,557	3,944	1,818	1,523
1849,	21,252	5,204	4,113	2,376	1,363
1850,	13,241	5,229	1,976	1,457	809
1851,	17,847	6,262	4,873	1,555	1,846
	——63,938	——21,252	——14,906	——7,206	——5,541

The following is a Summary View.

1. In New England.

	First Period.	Last Period.	Increase.
Boston, Ms.	$33,536	72,581	39,045
Worcester Central, Ms.	7,679	19,793	12,114
Brookfield Association, Ms.	5,719	14,328	8,609
Berkshire Co., Ms.	7,216	11,689	4,473
Hartford Co., Ct.	16,924	29,816	12,892
Windham Co., Ct.	4,449	9,729	5,280
Rutland, Vt.	3,119	6,246	3,127

Hillsboro', N. H.	7,245	10,528	3,283
Cumberland, Me.	4,643	9,315	4,672
	90,530	184,025	93,495

2. In New York.

	First.	Fifth.	Increase.
N. Y. City and Brooklyn,	$45,066	63,938	18,872
Geneva and Vicinity,	23,282	21,252	*2,030
Monroe Co.	8,226	14,906	6,680
Oneida Co.	17,956	7,206	*10,750
Buffalo and Vicinity,	3,553	5,541	1,988
	98,083	112,843	14,760

* Decrease.

VII. *Donations from States to the Board, in the years* 1839, 1844, *and* 1851.

The donations for 1839 and 1844, are taken from tables compiled and printed in pamphlet form several years ago. Those for 1851, are from the table supplementary to the Treasurer's Accounts in the last Annual Report.

States.	1839.	1844.	1851.
Maine,	$6,279	7,822	7,122
New Hampshire,	9,151	10,052	10,891
Vermont,	9,142	10,022	8,515
Massachusetts,	48,876	73,369	77,280
Connecticut,	33,975	37,259	38,534
Rhode Island,	1,652	2,957	2,678
New York,	48,554	45,828	60,800
New Jersey,	5,180	6,486	9,716
Pennsylvania,	12,823	10,558	12,466
Delaware,	515	607	540
Maryland,	1,272	768	2,152
District of Columbia,	631	646	642
Virginia,	392	2,444	1,400
North Carolina,	157	22	48
South Carolina,	1,303	1,139	1,239
Georgia,	2,459	1,770	3,395
Florida,	35	20	
Alabama,	1,399	843	244
Mississippi,	84	191	105
Louisiana,	130	281	185
Tennessee,	1,462	1,980	641
Kentucky,	855	482	127
Arkansas,	70	441	
Missouri,	1,438	475	303
Iowa,	}	241	331
Wisconsin,	10 }		927
Illinois,	2,240	1,948	3,591
Indiana,	690	928	1,961
Michigan,	318	1,263	2,119
Ohio,	7,628	9,874	11,905
Canada,		914	
Foreign Countries,	2,671	2,204	12,384
Co-operating Societies,	12,549		
Unknown,	685		
Texas,			36
California,			120
Minesota Territory,			104
Oregon Territory,			177

Other Societies operating in Foreign Missions.

VIII. *Receipts of the General Assembly's Board of Foreign Missions.*

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Average Annual Receipts.
1838,	$44,748		
1839,	56,150		
		*100,898	50,449
1840,	54,425		
1841,	62,344		
1842,	58,924		
1843,	54,760		
		230,453	57,613
1844,	66,674		
1845,	72,117		
1846,	76,395		
1847,	82,739		
		297,925	74,481
1848,	89,165		
1849,	96,294		
1850,	104,665		
1851,	108,544		
		398,668	99,667
1852,	117,882		

The grants of Bible and Tract Societies, and appropriations from the U. S. Government for Indian missions, have been deducted.

* For two years only.

IX. *Receipts of the American Bible Society as the result of Donations, and the appropriations made of the same.*

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Dona. for For. Dis.	App. for For. Uses.	Periods.	For Home Uses.
1832,	$47,564			631		
1833,	46,091			15,300		
1834,	54,570			17,000		
1835,	62,868			35,500		
		211,093			68,431	142,662
1836,	58,781		13,789	39,070		
1837,	35,728		6,589	6,326		
1838,	44,365		3,631	20,230		
1839,	53,285		5,840	19,465		
		192,159			85,091	107,068
1840,	48,030		6,418	10,549		
1841,	61,840		2,686	30,794		
1842,	74,530		3,843	16,619		
1843,	65,244		2,419	15,518		
		249,644			73,480	176,164
1844,	67,606		1,247	23,945		
1845,	68,468		1,091	13,792		
1846,	104,551		1,526	1,500		
1847,	73,946		965	18,000		
		314,571			57,237	257,334
1848,	94,505		1,938	9,500		
1849,	91,804		10,762	11,188		
1850,	117,794		1,483	17,900		
1851,	120,065			9,100		
		424,168			47,788	376,380
1852,		1,391,635			332,027	1,059,609

X. *Receipts of the American Tract Society as the result of Donations, and the appropriations made of the same.*

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	App. For. Dis.	Periods.	Colportage.	Periods.	Home Uses.	Dona. For. Dis.
1832,	$24,476		5,044					
1833,	31,229		10,000					
1834,	35,213		20,000					
1835,	60,628	—151,546	30,000	—65,044			86,502	
1836,	56,638		35,000					29,949
1837,	72,933		35,000					31,332
1838,	37,175		10,000					11,985
1839,	55,854	—222,600	30,000	—110,000			112,600	28,099
1840,	41,476		20,000					19,594
1841,	41,752		25,000					23,390
1842,	34,942		15,000					11,845
1843,	46,326	—164,496	15,000	—75,000	5,929	—5,929	89,506	5,929
1844,	56,680		20,000		15,011			4,382
1845,	66,080		6,000		25,382			1,313
1846,	71,132		15,000		31,043			4,305
1847,	67,771	—261,663	10,000	—51,000	40,191	—111,627	210,663	2,308
1848,	105,915		11,000		50,559			1,729
1849,	94,081		14,000		58,106			2,091
1850,	105,894		15,000		66,274			1,812
1851,	109,897	—415,787	20,000	—60,000	73,278	—248,217	355,787	790
1852,	116,406		20,000		79,073			
		1,216,092		361,044		365,773	855,058	

XI. *Receipts of the American Protestant Society, the Foreign Evangelical Society, and the American and Foreign Christian Union.*

American Protestant Society.

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Average Annual Receipts.
1844,	$6,746		
1845,	9,184		
1846,	19,709		
1847,	25,028	——60,667	15,166
1848,	28,704		
1849,	29,137	——57,841	28,920

Foreign Evangelical Society.

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Av. Ann. Receipts.
1840,	$10,210		
1841,	14,357		
1842,	10,900		
1843,	10,766	——46,233	11,558
1844,	13,356		
1845,	16,249		
1846,	20,146		
1847,	14,855	——64,606	16,151
1848,	19,439		
1849,	24,484		

* American and Foreign Christian Union.

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Av. Ann. Receipts.	App. to Home Uses.
1850,	$57,223			
1851,	56,265	——157,411	39,352	†64,000

* Constituted by the union of the Foreign Evangelical Society, the American Protestant Society, and the Christian Alliance.

† Conjectural.

XII. *Receipts of the American Missionary Association.*

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Av. Ann. Rec.	App. to Home Missions.	
1847,	$13,033				
1848,	17,095				
1849,	21,982			1,581	
1850,	25,159			3,186	
1851,	34,535			2,632	
		98,771	24,692		7,399

XIII. *Receipts for Foreign Missions, in Periods of four years each.*

Periods.	Amer. Board of Com. for For. Missions.	Pres. Board of For. Missions.	Amer. Bible Society.	Amer. Tract Society.	Am. & For. Ch. Union.	Am. Miss. Asso'n.
1836—39,	$908,649	*100,898	†85,091	†110,000		
1840—43,	1,039,531	230,453	73,480	75,000	46,233	
1844—47,	964,983	297,925	57,237	51,000	64,606	
1848—51,	1,072,526	398,668	47,788	60,000	93,411	91,372
	3,985,689	1,027,944	263,596	296,000	204,250	91,372
	1,027,944					
	263,596					
	296,000					
	204,250					
	91,372					

$5,868,851, total in 16 years for Foreign Missions.

* Two years only.

† Appropriations by the Society.

XIV. *Growth of the Foreign Missions.*

Periods.	Society.	Receipts in Periods.	Totals of Receipts in the Periods.	Average Annual Receipts.	
1836–39,	Am. B'd Com. For. Miss.	$908,649		227,162	
[1838, 9]	Pres. Board For. Miss.	100,898		25,224	
	Amer. Bible Society,	85,091		21,272	
	Amer. Tract Society,	110,000		27,500	
			1,204,638		301,159
1840–43,	Am. B'd Com. For. Miss.	1,039,531		259,882	
	Pres. Board For. Miss.	230,453		57,613	
	Amer. Bible Society,	73,480		18,370	
	Amer. Tract Society,	75,000		18,750	
	For. Evangelical Society,	46,238		11,559	
			1,464,702		366,175
1844–47,	Am. B'd Com. For. Miss.	964,983		241,245	
	Pres. Board For. Miss.	297,925		74,481	
	Amer. Bible Society,	57,237		14,309	
	Amer. Tract Society,	51,000		12,750	
	For. Evangelical Society,	64,606		16,151	
			1,435,751		353,937
1848–51,	Am. B'd Com. For. Miss.	1,072,526		268,131	
	Pres. Board For. Miss.	398,668		99,667	
	Amer. Bible Society,	47,788		11,947	
	Amer. Tract Society,	60,000		15,000	
	Am. and For. Chr. Union,	93,411		23,352	
	Am. Miss. Association,	91,372		22,843	
			1,763,765		440,941

HOME MISSIONS.

XV. *Receipts of the American Home Missionary Society.*

Society's Year.	Receipts.	Periods of Four Years.	Inc. in the Periods.	Av. Ann. Receipts.
1—1826-27,	$18,140,76			
2—1827-28,	20,035,78			
3—1828-29,	26,997,31			
4—1829-30,	33,929,44			
5—1830-31,	48,124,73	——129,087		32,271
6—1831-32,	49,422,12			
7—1832-33,	68,627,17			
8—1833-34,	78,911,44			
9—1834-35,	88,863,22	——285,823	156,737	71,455
10—1835-36,	101,565,15			
11—1836-37,	85,701,59			
12—1837-38,	86,522,45			
13—1838-39,	82,564,63	——356,353	70,530	89,088
14—1839-40,	78,345,20			
15—1840-41,	85,413,34			
16—1841-42,	92,463,64			
17—1842-43,	99,812,24	——356,034	*319	89,008
18—1843-44,	101,904,99			
19—1844-45,	121,946,28			
20—1845-46,	125,124,70			
21—1846-47,	116,617,94	——465,593	109,559	116,398
22—1847-48,	140,197,10			
23—1848-49,	145,925,91			
24—1849-50,	157,160,78			
25—1850-51,	150,942,25	——594,226	128,630	148,556
26—1851-52,	160,062,25			

* Less than in the preceding period.

XVI. *Receipts of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions.*

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Increase.	Av. Ann. Receipts.
1832	$23,030			
1833	27,058			
1834	23,451			
1835	22,664	——96,203		24,050
1836	25,000			
1837	30,961			
1838	22,747			
1839	24,063	——102,771	6,568	25,692
1840	21,413			
1841	20,636			
1842	16,321			
1843	19,108	——77,478	*25,293	19,369
1844	23,013			
1845	29,688			
1846	32,322			
1847	30,870	——115,893	38,415	28,973
1848	33,390			
1849	44,432			
1850	79,043			
1851	82,818	——239,683	123,790	59,920

* Less than in the preceding period.

XVII. *Receipts of the American Bible Society.*

(See IX. page 11.)

XVIII. *Receipts of the American Tract Society.*

(See X. page 12.)

XIX. *Receipts of the American Protestant Society, the Foreign Evangelical Society, and the American and Foreign Christian Union.*

(See XI. page 12.)

XX. *Receipts of the American Missionary Association.*

(See XII. page 13.)

XXI. *Receipts of the Society for the Promotion of Collegiate and Theological Education at the West.*

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Average Annual Receipts.
1844	$17,004		
1845	10,967		
1846	15,686		
1847	14,113	——57,770	14,442
1848	12,339		
1849	11,001		
1850	17,623		
1851	16,962	——57,925	14,481

A much larger sum than this was actually given for the Colleges in this space of time, though not through this Society.

XXII. *Receipts of the American Sunday School Union as the result of Donations.*

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Average Annual Receipts.
1832	$34,691		
1833	19,711		
1834	28,611		
1835	26,988	——110,001	27,500
1836	38,321		
1837	34,035		
1838	22,423		
1839	15,384	——110,163	27,540
1840	14,134		
1841	14,259		
1842	14,844		
1843	12,311	——55,548	13,887
1844	14,343		
1845	25,369		
1846	25,019		
1847	22,777	——87,508	21,877
1848	31,092		
1849	31,189		
1850	35,533		
1851	34,807	——132,621	33,155
1852	50,038		

XXIII. *Receipts of the American Education Society.*

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Average Annual Receipts.
1832	$42,030		
1833	47,836		
1834	57,818		
1835	83,062	——230,746	57,686
1836	63,227		
1837	65,574		
1838	55,660		
1839	55,075	——239,536	59,884
1840	51,963		
1841	63,113		
1842	34,491		
1843	33,789	——183,356	45,839
1844	34,811		
1845	34,842		
1846	39,348		
1847	28,299	——137,300	34,325
1848	24,974		
1849	27,301		
1850	28,428		
1851	27,591	——108,294	27,073
1852	29,376		

XXIV. *Presbyterian Board of Education.*

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Average Annual Receipts.
1832			
1833			
1834	$44,585		
1835	37,038	——*81,623	20,405
1836	50,064		
1837	41,850		
1838	33,094		
1839	33,562	——158,570	39,642
1840	23,273		
1841	†24,000		
1842	24,538		
1843	29,104	——100,915	25,228
1844	31,057		
1845	31,723		
1846	34,953		
1847	†34,000	——131,733	32,933
1848	31,078		
1849	37,754		
1850	32,447		
1851	36,501	——137,780	34,445
1852			

* For two years only.

† Conjectural.

XXV. *Receipts for Home Missions, in Periods of Four Years each.*

Periods.	Amer. Home Miss. Society.	Pres. Board of Home Missions.	Amer. Bible Society.	Amer. Tract Society.	Am. Prot. Soc. and A. & F. Ch. Un.
1832—35	$285,823	96,203	142,662	86,502	
1836—39	356,353	102,771	107,068	112,600	
1840—43	356,034	77,478	176,164	89.506	
1844—47	465,593	115.893	257,334	210,663	60,667
1848—51	594,226	239,683	376,380	355,787	121,841
	$2,058,029	632,028	1,059,608	855,058	182,508

	Western Coll. Society.	Am. Miss. Assoc.	Am. Sun. Sch. Union.	Am. Educa. Society.	Pres. Board of Educ.
1832—35			110,001	230,746	81,623
1836—39			110,163	239,536	158,570
1840—43			55,548	183,356	100,915
1844—47	57,770		87,508	137,300	131,733
1848—51	57,925	7,399	132,621	108,294	137,780
	115,695	7,399	495,841	899,232	610,621

	899,232
	495,841
	7,399
	115,695
	182,508
	855,058
	1,059,608
	632,028
	2,058,029
	$6,916,019

Period, 1832—35,	$285,823	
	96,203	
	142,662	
	86,502	
	110,001	
	230,746	
	81,623	
		1,033,560
In 16 years for Home Missions,		$5,882,459

XXVI. *Growth of the Home Missions.*

Periods.	Society.	Receipts in Periods.	Totals of Receipts in the Periods.	Average Annual Receipts.	
1836–39,	Am. Home Miss. Soc.	$356,353		89,088	
	Pres. Board Home Miss.	102,771		25,692	
	Amer. Bible Society,	107,068		26,767	
	Amer. Tract. Society,	112,600		28,150	
	Amer. Educa. Society,	239,536		59,884	
	Am. Sunday Sch. Union,	110,163		27,540	
	Presb. Board Education,	158,570		39,642	
			1,187,061		$296,765

Periods.	Society.	Receipts in Periods.	Totals of Receipts in the Periods.	Average Annual Receipts.	
1840–43,	Am. Home Miss. Soc.	356,034		89,008	
	Pres. Board Home Miss.	77,478		19,369	
	Amer. Bible Society,	176,164		44,041	
	Amer. Tract Society,	89,506		22,376	
	Amer. Educa. Society,	183,356		45,839	
	Am. Sunday Sch. Union,	55,548		13,887	
	Presb. Board Education,	100,915		25,228	
			1,039,001		259,750
1844–47,	Am. Home Miss. Soc.	465,593		116,398	
	Pres. Board Home Miss.	115,893		28,973	
	Amer. Bible Society,	257,334		64,333	
	Amer. Tract Society,	210,663		52,665	
	Amer. Educa. Society,	137,300		34,325	
	Am. Sunday Sch. Union,	87,508		21,877	
	Amer. Protestant Society,	60,667		15,166	
	Western Coll. Society,	57,770		14,442	
	Presb. Board Education,	131,733		32,933	
			1,524,461		381,115
1848–51,	Am. Home Miss. Soc.	594,226		148,556	
	Pres. Board Home Miss.	239,683		59,920	
	Amer. Bible Society,	376,380		94,096	
	Amer. Tract Society,	355,787		88,946	
	Amer. Educa. Society,	108,294		27,073	
	Am. Sunday Sch. Union,	132,621		33,155	
	Amer. Prot. Soc. and Am. and For. Ch. Union,	121,841		30,460	
	Western Coll. Society,	57,925		14,481	
	Amer. Miss. Assoc.	7,399		1,849	
	Presb. Board Education,	137,780		34,445	
			2,131,936		532,984

Annual Average Receipts for each Period.

Period.	American Home Miss. Society.	Presbyterian Board of Home Miss.	American Bible Society.	American Tract Society.	American Education Society.	Presbyterian Board of Education.	American Sunday Sch. Union.	Western College Society.
1836–39,	$89,088	25,692	26,767	28,150	59,884	39,642	27,540	
1840–43,	89,008	19,369	44,041	22,376	45,839	25,228	13,887	
1844–47,	116,398	28,973	64,333	52,665	34,325	32,933	21,877	14,442
1848–51,	148,556	59,920	94,095	88,946	27,073	34,445	33,155	14,481

XXVII. *Growth of Foreign and Home Missions.*

	FOREIGN MISSIONS.		HOME MISSIONS.	
	Totals.	Average annual.	Totals.	Average annual.
1836—39,	$1,204,638	301,159	$1,187,061	296,765
1840—43,	1,464,702	366,175	1,039,001	259,750
1844—47,	1,435,751	358,937	1,524,461	381,112
1848—51,	1,763,765	440,941	2,131,936	532,984
Total,	$5,868,856	1,467,212	5,882,456	1,470,611
Average,	$1,467,214	366,803	1,470,614	367,652
1848—51,	1,763,765	440,941	2,131,936	532,984
1836—39,	1,204,638	301,159	1,187,061	296,765
Increase,	$559,127	139,782	$944,875	236,219

ENGLISH FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The means are at hand for stating the receipts of English Foreign Missionary Societies, to a great extent, but not of those operating in the Home Missionary department. It will be sufficient, however, to give the receipts of two of the larger Missionary Societies, occupying the same ground, as regards the popular mind, with the larger benevolent societies generally in this country.

XXVIII. *Receipts of the London Missionary Society.*

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Average Annual Receipts.
1836	£63,714		
1837	71,335		
1838	84,821		
1839	80,321	——300,191	£75,047
1840	94,954		
1841	96,771		
1842	91,795		
1843	93,947	——377,467	94,366
1844	89,124		
1845	90,715		
1846	82,991		
1847	81,183	——344,013	86,003
1848	87,925		
1849	67,563		
1850	64,642		
1851	72,292	——292,422	73,105
1852	72,778		72,778

XXIX. *Receipts of the Church Missionary Society, England.*

Year.	Receipts.	Periods.	Average Annual Receipts.
1836	£70,465		
1837	74,731		
1838	91,723		
1839	95,505	——332,424	£83,106
1840	104,304		
1841	101,576		
1842	113,263		
1843	111,875	——431,018	107,754
1844	103,661		
1845	102,495		
1846	105,059		
1847	119,410	——430,625	107,456
1848	115,012		
1849	101,003		
1850	94,401		
1851	101,554	——411,970	102,992
1852	118,674		118,674

REMARKS.

1. The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions was formed in the year 1837. There is nothing in the table of receipts of the American Board, (p. 5,) that indicates the time when the Presbyterian Board went into operation. The greatest receipts of the former institution were in 1842, several years after the latter began to urge its claims on the Presbyterian church, (p. 11.) In the ninth period of four years, (1844–47,) there was a falling off in the receipts of the American Board, (p. 5.) In that period, there was no extraordinary increase in the receipts of the Presbyterian Board. There was, however, a great increase in the receipts for home uses of the Bible Society, (p. 11,) and especially of the Tract Society, (p. 12.) It was in that period the system of Colportage rose into popularity, the annual receipts for it going up to $40,000, and continuing to ascend till, in 1852, they reached nearly double that amount. It is an important fact, however, among the reasons why the receipts of the American Board have not increased faster, during the last sixteen years, that at least a million of dollars were contributed to other societies, for foreign missions, in that time, (p. 13,) by churches, a large portion of which once made the American Board their channel of operation in missions to the heathen. Yet it will be perceived there was an increase in the receipts of the Board on the whole, (p. 5.)

2. Taking the last four periods into view, (that is, the last sixteen years, 1836–1851,) it appears (p. 18) that, in the first of these periods, the Home Missionary effort of the country was nearly equal to the Foreign; that it lost, relatively and actually, in the second; that it took an advanced position in the third, and one still more advanced in the last. The increase of the fourth period over the first, in Foreign missions, (p. 18,) was $559,000; in Home missions it was 944,000; and the receipts for Home missions which are embodied in these tables in the last period, were $385,000 more than for Foreign missions. From which it follows, that the Foreign missionary enterprise of the country is not, as some suppose, in advance of the Home missionary enterprise properly considered; and were we to enlarge the number of home objects in the tables, as we might do, (without taking into view

the immense annual outlay for supporting pastors, building churches, etc. etc.,) this fact would be presented in a very striking light. In short, the two great departments of duty do not admit of any satisfactory comparison as to their relative importance; and it certainly is not by the loose comparisons which are usually made, that we come to any satisfactory conclusions as to our duty in respect to them. Both call loudly for an indefinite increase of effort. In Home missions the great work to be done is much more divided and sub-divided, than it is or can be in Foreign missions, (pp. 13, 17, 18.) The Foreign Missionary Society embodies the college and school societies, the theological education societies, the sabbath school societies, and the colportage.

3. In the Foreign Missions, there was a falling off in the third of the last four periods; but the average annual receipts of the fourth period exceeded those of the third by $92,000, (p. 18.)

4. The falling off in the Home Missions, was in the second period; but the average annual receipts of the third period, exceeded those of the second by $121,000. The average annual receipts in the fourth period, were $152,000 greater than in the third, (p. 18.)

5. The annual *donations* made to the American Bible Society, expressly for foreign objects, declined from $13,789, in 1836, apparently to less than a thousand, in 1851, (p. 11.) Its *appropriations* to foreign objects, however, were $39,070 in 1836, and $9,100 in 1851. Its average annual appropriations for foreign objects, the past sixteen years, were $16,474. Its appropriation of donations received for home uses, in this period, was $916,947; an excess of $653,351 above its foreign appropriations in the same time, (p. 11.)

6. The annual *donations* to the American Tract Society, expressly for foreign objects, declined from $29,949 in 1836, to $790 in 1851, (p. 12.) Its *appropriations* to foreign objects, however, were $35,000 in 1836, and $20,000 in 1851. Its average annual appropriations for foreign objects, for sixteen years, was $18,500. Its appropriation of donations received for home uses, in this period, was $768,556; an excess of 572,556 over its foreign appropriations in the same time, (p. 12.) The donations for Colportage, rose from $5,929 in 1843, to $73,278 in 1851, and $79,073 in 1852. Its donations appropriated to home uses, (including Colportage,) rose from $112,600 in the first of the four last periods, to $355,787 in the last period, (p. 12.)

7. It will be seen, that the Theological Education department of Home Missions, needs especial attention by the friends of the cause, (p. 17.) In the Presbyterian Education Board there is a falling off in the second period, but an increase in the two following, that is the last two periods. The receipts of the American Education Society declined in all the last three periods. The receipts of the Western College Society in the last two periods, should be taken into the account.

8. It will be noticed, (p. 19,) that the London Missionary Society experienced a decline in its receipts, in the last two periods of four years; and that the Church Missionary Society's receipts, though large, declined in the last three periods; though they rose, in the year 1852, to the sum of £118,674, or $569,635. It should be stated, that the Church Missionary Society received extra contributions, in its Jubilee or Fiftieth year, (1848-49,) to the amount of £52,822, or $253,545, not included in the regular annual receipts.

9. It would seem, that occasional retardations in the different great departments of the work, are unavoidable, and it may not always be easy to account for them satisfactorily. The necessity for constant watchfulness and effort to secure a steady advancement, which is exceedingly desirable, is not to be regretted. We should "watch unto prayer," as well as unto every other appropriate kind of effort.

10. The *general stability* of this great work of Missions, Home and Foreign, is astonishing; and is to be accounted for only by referring the whole to an unseen, watchful, *divine* influence.

APPENDIX.

There is in Massachusetts an Auxiliary Foreign Missionary Society, [the Brookfield,] embracing at present sixteen churches, which for many years has published an Annual Report, embracing, with but few exceptions, every subscriber's name and the amount of every individual subscription. These Reports furnish statistics of great value. From them, several years ago, tables were constructed, embracing a period of four years, from 1838 to 1841, inclusive; and recently like tables have been made out, embracing four years, from 1847 to 1850, and then also tables comparing the action of the Society for these two periods. The sixteen churches have, in most cases, their own male and female Missionary Associations. They are probably as well organized, as sure to make an annual collection at the proper time, and as sure to do the work well, as any like number of adjoining churches anywhere in the United States.

SUMMARY FOR THE YEARS 1838–41.

The following table presents a classification of subscriptions, in the years 1838–1841, and shows the number of subscribers under several sums, from six cents up to ten dollars.

Years.	Dollars.						Fractional parts of a dollar.										No. of contributors.	Amount contributed.
	10	5	4	3	2	1	75	60	50	40	37	30	25	20	12	10	6	
1838.																		
Gentlemen,	20	41	2	39	75	279	7	1	153	2	1	2	75		19	5	4	725 $1,184.15
Ladies,	4	10	4	21	64	246	27	7	415	6	9	14	441		144	30	51	1,493 917.39
	24	51	6	60	139	525	34	8	568	8	10	16	516		163	35	55	2,218 $2,091.54
1839.																		
Gentlemen,	20	36	4	43	77	283	18		176	1	1	4	120	6	43	5	19	856 1,211.45
Ladies,	3	8	5	15	58	264	45	8	450	2	13	11	528	27	140	37	41	1,655 1,019.39
	23	44	9	58	135	547	63	8	626	3	14	15	648	33	183	42	60	2,511 $2,230.84
1840.																		
Gentlemen,	37	29	13	46	98	324	11		225	1	1		137	7	42	18	24	1,013 1,571.13
Ladies,		15	8	20	69	281	24	5	478	3	11	11	535	42	161	37	67	1,767 942.64
	37	44	21	66	167	605	35	5	703	4	12	11	672	49	203	55	91	2,780 $2,513.77
1841.																		
Gentlemen,	34	44	11	41	92	267	21	3	184	1	1	6	144		28	6	19	902 1,526.85
Ladies,		27	7	19	85	290	54	28	424	8	15	23	556		163	49	74	1,822 1,169 37
	34	71	18	60	177	557	75	31	608	9	16	29	700		191	55	93	2,724 $2,696 22

GENERAL SUMMARY.

Years.	Dollars.						Fractional parts of a dollar.										No. of contributors.	Amount contributed.
	10	5	4	3	2	1	75	60	50	40	37	30	25	20	12	10	6	
1838,	24	51	6	60	139	525	34	8	568	8	10	16	516		163	35	55	2,218 $2,091.54
1839,	23	44	9	58	135	547	63	8	626	3	14	15	648	33	183	42	60	2,511 2,230.84
1840,	37	44	21	66	167	605	35	5	703	4	12	11	672	49	203	55	91	2,780 2,513.77
1841,	34	71	18	60	177	557	75	31	608	9	16	29	700		191	55	93	2,724 2,696 22
	118*	210	54	244	618	2,234	207	52	2,505	24	52	71	2,536	82	740	187	299	10,233 $9,532.37
Average,	29	52	13	61	154	558	51	13	626	6	13	17	634	20	185	46	74	2,558 $2,383.09

* This should be stated $10 and upwards; thirty-five of the subscriptions were over $10.

1838,	Contributions at the Monthly Concert,	$465.31	
1839,	" " " "	647.97	
1840,	" " " "	584.45	
1841,	" " " "	509.82	
			$2,207.55
Amount of subscriptions,			9,532.37
From other sources,			276.14
Whole amount of contributions in money, from 1838 to 1841, inclusive,			$12,016.06

SUMMARY FOR THE YEARS 1847–51.

Subscriptions.	No. of Subscribers.	Subscriptions.	No. of Subscribers.
Under 10 cents,	333	1 to 2 dollars,	151
10 cents,	315	2 dollars,	484
12½ cents,	448	2 to 3 dollars,	50
12½ to 25 cents,	173	3 dollars,	250
25 cents,	2,343	3 to 5 dollars,	52
25 to 50 cents,	133	5 dollars,	233
50 cents,	2,088	5 to 10 dollars,	63
50 to 100 cents,	177	10 dollars,	113
1 dollar,	1,624	Over 10 dollars,	83

Whole amount from subscriptions,	$10,525.58
From Monthly Concerts and other sources,	3,396.40
Total,	$13,921.98

Whole amount for four years, including Monthly Concert,	$13,921
Average annual amount,	$3,480
Number of church members in 1850,	2,403
Average annual amount to each,	$1.36

Amount raised by the Gentlemen's Associations,	$6,027
Average annual amount,	$1,506
Male members of church in 1850,	702
Average number of male subscribers,	763
Average annual amount to each,	$1.96
Average annual amount to each male member of the church,	$2.14

Amount raised by Ladies' Associations,	$4,208
Average annual amount,	$1,052
Female members of the church in 1850,	1,701
Average annual number of female subscribers,	1,433
Average annual amount to each female subscriber,	$0.73
Average annual amount to each member of the church,	$0.62

A writer in the "Journal of Missions" for November, 1851, the Rev. I. R. Worcester, District Secretary for Massachusetts, remarks as follows, on the statistical tables so usefully printed by the Brookfield Auxiliary.

What do the Statistics published by this Society show?

They show, unexpectedly, that the number of contributors to the American Board in these towns is somewhat smaller now, than it was ten years ago, though nearly the whole amount of falling off is accounted for in a single parish. (The number has diminished in several towns, but in others it has increased.) But while the number of subscribers has diminished, the amount subscribed has increased. In the first period the whole amount raised in these towns, including monthly concert contributions, was $11,717 10; in the last period it was $13,921 98, or $3,480 50 annually upon the average.

This is about $1 36 to each member of the churches. In the former period the average annual amount was about $1 03 to each church member. One town has increased in its contributions 142 per cent. Another 105 per cent. The increase in the whole Association is about 18½ per cent; though, according to the number of church members, it is 32 per cent. Several churches have fallen off.

The figures show that there are many members of these churches who do nothing for the Board. In fourteen of the churches the number of members in 1850 was 2,403, but the average annual number of subscribers in the last period, in these towns, was but 2,196. Now many subscribe who are not members of the churches. In one parish the number of subscribers is more than twice as great as the number of church members. There must, then, be several hundreds of professing Christians in these churches who do nothing for this Society. How large a part of them contribute to the cause of missions through other channels, we cannot say.

The average annual number of male subscribers, in these 14 towns in the latter period, was 763; 61 more than the number of male members of the churches in 1850. The female members of the same churches in 1850 were 1,701, and the female subscribers in these towns were, on the average, only 1,433 annually, for this period; 268 less than the number of female church members. In the former period, the whole average annual number of subscribers in the same 14 towns was 2,353, viz. males, 826; females, 1,527; number of church members in 1840, 2,632; males, 815; females, 1,817.

In both periods, therefore, the annual number of male subscribers slightly exceeded the number of male members of the church, while the annual number of female subscribers was considerably less than the number of females in the churches.

The figures show, also, this pleasing fact: that the number of large contributors is increasing. In the former period of four years, there were but thirty-five subscriptions exceeding $10 in amount, and eighty-four of just $10. In the latter period there were eighty-three exceeding $10, and one hundred and thirteen of just ten. The number of subscriptions exceeding $2, in the former period, was six hundred and twenty-six; but in the latter it was eight hundred and forty-four, though the whole number of subscriptions, as stated above, had diminished. But though the number of large subscriptions has increased, it will be seen that it is still painfully small. Would it have been supposed that for the last four years, in these sixteen towns, there had been but eighty-three subscriptions, (twenty-one annually, upon an average,) out of more than nine thousand in all, exceeding ten dollars?

Again. The figures show that, though some are going forward, a very large part of the subscribers still do but very little. Of 9,113 subscriptions, the whole number in the last period, (omitting some juvenile associations,) 3,612 were in sums not exceeding twenty-five cents each; and 6,010, or 1,502 annually, in sums of less than one dollar each!

The figures show, also, quite too conclusively, that the amount subscribed, generally, is by no means regulated by the exact ability of the subscribers. Subscriptions are in *convenient* sums; in sums which constitute a kind of

units in our currency. Thus there are 313 subscriptions of ten cents, and 448 of 12½ cents, but only 173 between 12½ and 25 cents, and then 2,343 of 25 cents. There are only 133 between 25 and 50 cents, but 2,088 of 50 cents; 177 all the way between 50 cents and one dollar, and 1,624 of one dollar. From one dollar the general rule is to go to two, from two to three, from three, not to four, but to five, and from five to ten. Here is a hint for agents and pastors. People need not be urged to *double* their subscriptions, but only to increase. If they increase, they will at least double in a large majority of cases.

Here, too, is a hint for those who sometimes urge a general increase of 12½ per cent., or 25 per cent. upon all subscriptions, to meet the wants of the Board. No such general increase can be secured. The 25 cent subscribers will not go to 28 or 31 cents, nor will the one dollar subscribers often go to 1,12½ or 1,25. Every such effort is vain, in the present state of the church. Men do not calculate so closely upon what they can give. Some of those who give by hundreds and by thousands, may make such a proportionate increase, but not the great number of small contributors.

Much more might be said in regard to what these figures show, but the reader will now be left to his own reflections, with only this additional remark,—they show that even in the best sections of Massachusetts there is much room for improvement. And if this is true of the best sections of this State, what shall be said of the country at large? Can there not be an advance?

Correction.—At page 6, bottom line, for 471,256, read 271,256.

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1852.

FORTIETH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

OF

TOLLAND COUNTY,

WITH AN APPENDIX.

HARTFORD;
PRESS OF CASE, TIFFANY, AND COMPANY.
1852.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The fortieth annual meeting of the Tolland County Foreign Missionary Society was held at the Second Congregational Church in Rockville, on Thursday, Sept. 18th, 1852, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

The President, Hon. N. O. Kellogg, was in the chair.

Prayer was offered by the Rev. G. A. Calhoun, D. D.

The minutes of the last annual meeting were read.

The following officers were chosen for the ensuing year.

The Hon. N. O. KELLOGG, President.
The Rev. G. A. CALHOUN, D. D., First Vice-President.
The Rev. JOSEPH VAILL, D. D., Second Vice-President.
The Rev. ALBERT SMITH, Secretary.
J. R. FLYNT, Esq., Treasurer.
NELSON KINGSBURY, Esq., Auditor.

It was voted that the next annual meeting be held at the Village Church in South Coventry.

The Treasurer's report was read and accepted. By that report, the amount of the contributions of the churches in the county during the year, is $2,667.72; to which are to be added $26.25 from North Coventry and $200 from Vernon, making a total of $2,893.97. This includes a legacy of $80 in Vernon, and a donation of $500 from "a female friend" in Somers.

The report of the Secretary was read, accepted, and referred for publication to a committee consisting of the Rev. Dr. Vaill, the Rev. Dr. Calhoun, and Nelson Kingsbury, Esq.

Addresses were delivered by the Rev. Messrs. TRACY, of the Madura Mission, SCUDDER, of the Ceylon Mission, BUSHNELL, of the Gaboon Mission, and BENTON, of the Syrian Mission.

The Society was adjourned to meet at the Village Church in South Coventry, on Thursday of the week following the annual meeting of the A. B. C. F. M. in 1853, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

REPORT.

During the past year no one of the officers of this society has been called away by death. In view of the great work in which we are engaged, we have reason not only to thank God that our lives are spared, but also to congratulate ourselves that we live at a period when the prophecies of Scripture, and the prayers of believers, are so evidently on the road to their accomplishment. Christianity, spell-bound for centuries, has at length recovered her pristine vigor, and begun anew the missionary work. Old systems of error tremble at her approach. The hoary superstitions of eastern Asia, where the majority of the human race are congregated in dense masses, totter to their fall. Even the ancient people of God, though blinded by prejudice, and hardened in unbelief, are forced to see that a great light has risen on the nations, and that the Gentiles with their Kings come to the brightness of its rising. Under the plastic influences of the religion of Christ human nature is recast in a mold of celestial origin. Depraved communities are purified—savage tribes humanized—morals improved, and all the highest interests of humanity promoted. Animated by the pulses of a new life, the nominally Christian churches of the old world, for ages corrupted and effete, seem to renew their youth like the eagles; Ethiopia stretching out her hands unto God, gladly receives his word; and the multitude of the isles rejoice in his law. On the western shores of our own vast country the hum of gathering populations is in our ears. The Scripture is fulfilled in the birth of a nation in a day, and infant empires in a double sense Pacific, bind together the old world and the new. Every where the word of God finds listening ears. The singular condition of the world, and the wonderful developments of Providence, present the most encouraging opportunities and the most imperious calls for the church of Christ to cast her golden offerings into the treasury of the Lord, to put forth all her strength in efforts to

advance his cause, and to pour out her whole heart in prayer for the final triumph of the faith. To bear even a humble part, in this glorious work, is a great privilege. It is not a question whether in this state of things the members of our churches are bound to do something to increase the influence of the Bible at home, and to extend the knowledge of it abroad. But *what* and *how much* they shall do, are questions that will bear discussion. On these points we present the following suggestions.

The outgoing charity of the churches, has in this age sought for itself new channels, and certain great benevolent societies have been made the almoners of its bounty. By this means it has become possible to ascertain its direction, and to measure its amount. In this county the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the American Home Missionary Society, the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, the American and Foreign Christian Union, and the various societies for the promotion of Christian education, are the institutions in which the churches are most deeply interested. If we had a systematic and thorough method of collecting and recording the sums annually contributed to these and other objects, it would not be so difficult as it now is, to determine the real state of feeling in the churches as tested by practical results. It is now forty years since our County Foreign Missionary Society was organized (September, 1812) as auxiliary to the A. B. C. F. M. The cause of foreign missions was thus separated from the other objects of benevolence, the annual meetings made more prominent, and the sums contributed more easily ascertained by passing through the hands of a county treasurer.

The other objects for which collections have been made, have remained under the general supervision of the Consociation, and their claims have commonly been in some way acknowledged at the annual meetings of that body. For the purpose, however, of securing more concentrated and efficient action, a new association has been this day organized under the name of the Tolland County Society for Home Evangelization, to embrace the missionary work as carried on by the American Home Missionary Society, together with the American Bible Society and the American Tract Society.

There is no good reason why the foreign missionary work should be singled out, set apart from sister institutions, and held up as if it were the only great religious object toward which the energies of the churches are to be directed. Let these institutions be grouped together as a lovely sisterhood of charities, with mutual affections,

mutual interests, and common claims. To sustain their annual meetings as *the religious anniversaries of the county*, we propose to make an appeal to the churches. We ask for the presence from year to year of all those members of the churches who find time and means to attend political gatherings, and of many who do not. We ask them to come and hear what the delegations in attendance from the great American benevolent societies have to say of the state of the country and the world, of the need and the progress of the gospel. We ask their eloquent men to come and speak a word for our encouragement, and their praying women to be there that their hearts may be enlarged. We want the aged for instruction and counsel—the young for enterprise and action. True, the business we discuss is not of a money-making, or of an electioneering kind. The kingdom of Christ is not *of* this world, though it is easy to show that it exerts a powerful and salutary influence *on* the world. We trust that there is in the hearts of our brethren and sisters, a chord that vibrates to the touch of Christian sympathy, and the interest they already feel in this great cause is destined to receive a large increase.

But the topics to which we wish to turn your more particular attention in this Report as one of high importance, is that of *system in our charities*. It is well known that this subject has recently excited interest in this country, that able treatises have been published on the duty of Christians in respect to it; and it is believed that a sentiment in favor of regularity and consistency in giving, is rising in the churches. At the late meeting of the American Board there was distributed a pamphlet of twenty-six pages, called a "Statistical History of Benevolent Contributions in the last sixteen years," the object of which is to answer the question, "Are Foreign and Home Missions advancing in this country?"—also the question, "Do our Home Missions receive their share of support?" All the papers submitted by the secretaries of that society are prepared with much care, and with many obvious advantages. They are therefore worthy of confidence. We propose to give a brief analysis of a part only of that pamphlet as bearing on our present object.

I.

Omitting the first year of the history of the Board, (1811,) and the last year, (1852,) the pamphlet in its first table divides the remaining forty years into ten periods of four years each. From that table we learn that in those forty years the receipts of the Board have risen (fractions omitted) from $13,000 in 1812, to $275,000, in 1851; also

that the first year's receipts (1811) were $999.52; and those of the last year (1852) $301,732.70—which last sum is larger than has been received in any other year except 1842, when the receipts suddenly rose from $235,000 in 1841, to $318,000 in 1842, falling back again the next year (1843) to $244,000. From this table we learn also two other striking facts, (1) that it has been so common a thing for the receipts of the Board in one year to fall below those of the preceding year, that there are only three of the ten periods of four years each in which this has not occurred in some one of the years; yet (2) at the same time the average of the four years' receipts of each period is always greater than the average of the preceding period—except in one instance, the ninth period, which is the period following that embracing the unusally large receipts of 1842. It appears then, that, with the exception just stated as caused by the flush receipts of 1842, there has been in the whole history of the Board a steady increase in the receipts of each period of four years, beginning with $46,000, (average $11,000 a year,) in the first period (1812—1815,) and ending with $1,072,000, (average $268,000 a year,)in the last period (1848–1851;) while the eleventh period begins the present year (1852) with an income of $301,000, *and a treasury free from debt.*

In all this there is much to encourage. It exhibits a wonderful *degree*, and we may say *law* of permanence. And this steady growth is the more to be admired when we remember that within the last sixteen years the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, and the American Missionary Association, have been organized, and that in that time more than a million of dollars have been thus contributed to this object by churches, a large part of which once acted with the American Board.

II.

Another point of interest is a comparison of the receipts of the Board for the last twenty years from Massachusetts and Connecticut. These begin in 1832 with $26,000 from Massachusetts, and $17,000 from Connecticut, and end in 1851 with $77,000 from Massachusetts, and $38,000 from Connecticut. By inspecting this table it will appear that in the first ten of the last twenty years, (1832–1841 inclusive,) if we add one-half to the contributions of Connecticut in any year we shall *in general* have nearly the sum raised in Massachusetts the same year. In one of those years (1838) the contributions of Connecticut exceeded those of Massachusetts by a few hun-

dred dollars ($38,526, and $38,213;) and the next year (1839) the contributions of Connecticut nearly equal those of Massachusetts, ($33,113, and $31,730.) But in the last ten years (1842–1851 inclusive) it is in general necessary *to double* the contributions of Connecticut in any year (instead of adding *one-half* as in the preceding ten years,) in order to reach those of Massachusetts. In the ten years from 1832 to 1841 inclusive, the contributions of Massachusetts amount to $353,000; those of Connecticut to $255,000; *i. e.*, in those ten years Massachusetts was to Connecticut as seven to five. In the next ten years from 1842 to 1851 inclusive, the contributions of Massachusetts were $716,000; those of Connecticut $359,000;* *i. e.*, in the last ten years Massachusetts is to Connecticut as two to one. In the last ten years then the relation of Massachusetts to Connecticut in this work has changed from the ratio of seven to five, to the ratio of two to one. It is stated by the Secretaries that the increase in the contributions has been greatest in New England. This table shows that this increase has been decidedly greater in Massachusetts than in Connecticut.

In 1851, the receipts of the Board (fractions omitted) were:

From Massachusetts, contributions, $71,000; legacies, $6,000; total $77,000. From Connecticut, contributions, $34,000; legacies, $4,000; total, $38,000.

If we divide these sums by the number of church members in each state, (67,000 for Massachusetts, and 42,000 for Connecticut,) the result is as follows.

From each church member in Massachusetts, *with* the legacies, $1.15; *without* the legacies $1.06. From each church member in Connecticut, *with* the legacies 90 cts.; *without* the legacies 80 cts. In 1851, therefore, the average *receipt* from each church member in Massachusetts was to the same from each church member in Connecticut, as $1.15 to 90 cts, or as twenty-three to eighteen; the average *contribution* of each church member in Massachusetts was to the same in Connecticut as $1.06 to 80 cts.; or as fifty-three to forty.

In 1852, the receipts as acknowledged in the Herald are:

From Massachusetts, contributions, $79.583,55; legacies, $12,791.18; total $92,374.73. From Connecticut, contributions, $38,721.36; legacies, $8,052.24; total $46,773.60.

These sums divided by the number of church members (68,000 for

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*In the latter part of this period certain churches and portions of churches in both states, paid their contributions to the American Missionary Association.

Massachusetts, and 44,000* for Connecticut) give the following results. In 1852, the average receipt from each church member in Massachusetts, is, *with* the legacies $1.35; *without* the legacies $1.17. The average receipt from each church member in Connecticut, is, *with* the legacies $1.06; *without* the legacies 88 cts. From 1851 to 1852, therefore, the change in the receipts from each church member in Massachusetts has been, including legacies, from $1.15 to $1.35; and without the legacies from $1.06 to $1.17. In Connecticut the change in the same time has been, including legacies, from 90 cts. to $1.06, and without the legacies, from 80 cts. to 88 cts. These changes in the averages of the two states produced an advance in the receipts of the Board in 1852, over those of 1851; in Massachusetts, of $8,336.63 in contributions, and of $6,762.52 in legacies; total $15,099.20; in Connecticut, of $4,784.16, in contributions, and of $3,954.69 in legacies; total $8,738.85.

In 1850 a table was prepared in which the churches acting through the American Board were distributed in districts. The average contribution of each church for 1850 was stated at $78.37; of each church member at 74 cts. This included the legacies. In that table the lowest average was that of the churches in Michigan, 33 cts; the highest that of Massachusetts, $1.14.

Connecticut was set down next after Massachusetts at $1.05.

III.

This auxiliary society has received the present year $2,893.97; an advance on the sum received in 1851 ($2,459.79) of $434.18. It is to be observed, however, that of this year's receipts, $80 came from a legacy in Vernon, and $500 from "a female friend" in Somers, whereas there was no legacy last year, nor is such a donation likely to be repeated. The number of church members in this county January 1, 1852, was 2,275, and the average to each the present year is, legacy included, $1.27, (while that of Connecticut is $1.06;) without the legacy $1.24, (while that of Connecticut is 88 cts.) Exclusive of the legacy and the large donation, the average of the county is $1.02. In respect to their contributions to this object the present year (legacy excluded) the churches of this county, as will be

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* These numbers are *estimated* from the Minutes of the two General Associations. The number of non-resident church members, and the number of donors not members of any church, are unknown. These two classes must be set off against each other.

seen by reference to the table of averages connected with this Report, may be divided into four classes.

1. In five churches with 869 members, the average of the members of each church exceeds that of Massachusetts, ($1.17.)

2. In four churches with 335 members, the average falls below that of Massachusetts, ($1.17,) but equals or exceeds that of Connecticut, ($0.88.)

3. In three churches with 404 members, the average falls below that of Connecticut, ($0.88,) but exceeds the general average of 1850 ($0.74.)

4. In eight churches with 681 members, the average falls below the general average of church members contributing to the Board as indicated by the table of 1850, ($0.74.) Of these eight churches, one, with sixty members, gives nothing.

If any one supposes that in going into these particulars we are descending to small matters, let him consider that while the churches in this county are among the feeblest in the state in point of numbers, every *cent* added to the contributions of each of their members is $25 in the treasury of some benevolent institution; every *dime* $250; every quarter of a dollar $600—a sum sufficient to support a missionary in Hindostan, or Persia, or two in Iowa, or Oregon. If we look at the contributions of the church members of Connecticut, every cent is $440; every dime is $4,400; every quarter of a dollar $11,000. In Massachusetts every cent is $680; every dime $6,800; every quarter of a dollar $17,000. The questions therefore are very important: How can we increase the number of contributions? How can we increase the contributions of those who give very little? It is to the *masses* we must look for steady support; for the masses live, while individuals die. We love to hear the dash of the cataract, to see the gushing volume and the spreading spray of the noble fountain. But we must not forget that it is the glistening dew, and the gentle rain whose small and silent but widely extended drops replenish the moisture of the thirsty earth. There is no time here to discuss this topic; but there are two things which may be stated as fundamental requisites to the most hopeful efforts, viz., to learn all the facts in the case, and to get those facts before the churches.

In the statistical pamphlet just published by the American Board there is an account of one of the most efficient auxiliary missionary societies in the country, that of the Brookfield Association, Massachusetts. For many years that society has published an annual Report embracing such particulars as are important to be known by the

churches connected with it, especially the names of the officers and donors, and the amount of each contribution, in the local societies. "These Reports" say the secretaries of the A. B. C. F. M, "furnish statistics of great value." From facts thus collected and recorded, many important deductions may be made which can be safely reached in no other way. The following may be taken as specimens. The figures show that of 9,000 subscriptions in the last four years, only eighty-three (twenty-one a year) came in sums of more than $10, yet that the number of large contributions is increasing *without any increase in the whole number of donors.* Of two periods of four years each, the first from 1838 to 1841, the second from 1847 to 1850; in the first period the subscriptions over $10, were only thirty-five, in the second period eighty-three; subscriptions of just $10, in the first period eighty-four, in the second period 113; subscriptions over $2, in the first period 626, in the second period 844. The last Report (1851) contains a table of the contributions of each of the congregations in that Association for twenty-seven years, beginning with a total of $539.53 in 1824, (when the society was organized,) and ending with $3,529.46 in 1850: total for twenty-seven years, $59,634.12. The number of church members in these seventeen churches, January 1, 1851, was 2,610. Divided by this number, the amount of the contributions in the last of these twenty-seven years (1850) gives $1.31 as the average for that year, per church member in that Association. The same year the average in Tolland County (with a legacy of $50) was eighty-nine cents. The next year (1851) there was an advance of twenty-five per cent. in the *contributions* of Tolland County, which (without the aid of any legacy) raised the average to $1.05, while the contributions and the average of the Brookfield Association remained nearly the same. The present year there is another advance in the receipts of the Tolland County Society from $2,459.79 in 1851, to $2,893.97 in 1852. But as $580 of the receipts for 1852 consist of a legacy and an extra subscription, the increase of the permanent and reliable contributions is less than it might seem to be. If $500 bestowed by one individual is to be thankfully acknowledged as worth $500, the same sum received from 500 individuals is to be rejoiced in as worth at least ten times as much. It is an object of the highest importance to render the benevolent action of the church as nearly as possible universal and steady. If the charities of the church are sustained by only a portion of her members she is marching to the conquest of the world with one side paralyzed. The heart beats but the blood circulates only in part. Facts indi-

cate that while a large proportion of professing Christians contribute very little for the spread of religion, no inconsiderable part are even yet doing absolutely nothing. Why does not the living spirit in the church of Christ cry out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Is there no battery to galvanize this torpid mass of flesh? In our efforts to raise the standard and increase the spirit of benevolence, it is needful that we have some system. We wish to know *the facts*, and in order that we may get them it will be necessary that in each of the churches or parochial associations connected with this society, pains should be taken yearly to collect and arrange them. Heretofore we have depended simply on the report of the county treasurer, but as all the money does not pass through his hands, the practice of the Brookfield Association which requires from each of the local secretaries an annual report to the county secretary is undoubtedly the most efficient. It is earnestly desired therefore, that before the next meeting of this society and as early as possible, the secretary of each parochial association, (both ladies' and gentlemen's, also juvenile associations where such exist,) or some person acting as such, will furnish the county secretary with the names of its officers and collectors, *and of all donors, with the sum subscribed by each.* It will be an important aid also if it shall be stated *how many of these are members of the church, and how many are children, with the amount subscribed by each of these classes.* In possession of these needful elements of calculation we shall be in a condition to speak of what we know, and not merely of what we guess. The great object in view, is to do what we can towards getting *the whole church to do its whole duty.* When the English Wesleyans some years since, on occasion of their Centennary, collected a very large sum for ecclesiastical purposes, to the inquiry of an American how they were able to do so great a work, the significant reply was, "We are *all* at it, and we are *always* at it."

In the full belief that although we may not accomplish all we desire, yet by energy and perseverance we shall not fail to accomplish something, and that it is possible, in the next forty years' operations of this society, for the flight of the gospel through its instrumentality to become more "as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold," these facts and suggestions are respectfully submitted.

APPENDIX.

I.

The following resolution was passed, *unanimously*, by the Consociation of Tolland County, at its annual meeting held at Marlborough, October 12th, 1852.

Resolved, That this Consociation approve of the efforts proposed to be made by the officers of our county benevolent societies, to raise the standard of benevolence among us, and that we recommend to the churches under our care, to furnish the secretaries of those societies with the facts called for by them, for the purpose of introducing a more accurate system into the accounts of our religious contributions.

II.

To the Pastors and Officers of the Congregational Churches in Tolland Co.

Dear Brethren:

As Secretaries of the Benevolent Societies of the County, it devolves on us to collect and arrange the facts pertaining to the several objects of benevolence. We take the liberty to call your attention to the suggestions on page 13, as well as to the Resolution of Consociation in approval of these efforts, and to request that as early as possible, at least three weeks before the annual meeting, you will furnish us with information on the following points in your several congregations. To which of us the papers are forwarded is not material, but that they contain *all the facts*, *is* material.

1. The names of the officers and collectors of your Association, (ladies', gentlemen's and juvenile.)

2. The names of all donors to the several objects patronized, with the sum subscribed by each.

3. How many of these are members of the church, and how many are not.

4. How many are children under fourteen years of age.

5. The amount subscribed by members of the church, by other adults, and by children.

6. The number of the resident, and of the non-resident members of the church.

By a prompt and accurate response to this call, you will enable us to carry out an important system which it is impossible for us to sustain without your aid.

The next annual meeting will be held at the Village Church, in South

Coventry, the week following the annual meeting of the A. B. C. F. M., in 1853. The meeting of the Society for Home Evangelization, will commence on Wednesday, at 2 o'clock, P. M.; the meeting of the Foreign Missionary Society, on Thursday, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

ALBERT SMITH,
HENRY B. BLAKE, } *Secretaries.*

III.

TABULAR VIEW of the number of members of the several churches in Tolland County in 1852, with the average per member of the subscription to Foreign Missions, in the society connected with each church, in 1850, 1851, and 1852, *legacies not included.*

SOCIETIES.	Members, 1852.	Average, 1850.	Average, 1851.	Average, 1852.
Andover,	51	$1.58	$1.66	$1.00
Bolton,	73	0.00	.39	.14
Columbia,	120	.60	.60	.60
Coventry First,	121	.66	.72	.73
Coventry North,	160	1.11	.96	.85
Coventry Village,	92	.63	1.14	2.17
Ellington,	157	.60	.64	.77
Gilead,	81	.64	.62	.57
Hebron,	119	.77	1.04	.88
North Mansfield,	87	.66	.67	.78
Rockville First,	199	.96	1.01	1.28
Rockville Second,	148	2.71	2.14	1.82
Somers,	221	.51	1.20	2.82 or .55
Stafford East,	72	.41	.12	.35
Stafford Springs,	53	0.00	0.00	.94
Stafford West,	65	0.00	0.00	0.00
Tolland,	93	.35	.35	.89
Union,	51	.47	.46	.47
Vernon,	209	2.62,	2.88	2.62
Willington,	103	.20	.26	.38
Tolland County,	2,275		1.05	1.24
Connecticut,	44,000		.80	.88
Massachusetts,	68,000		1.06	1.17

REMARKS.

1. The numbers in the first column are taken from the latest Minutes of the General Association in which the churches are reported, and are for January 1st. Large additions have been made during the year to several of the churches.

2. The averages are made out from the contributions and number of members for each year, closing with the annual meeting in September.

3. The number of absent members, and the number of donors not church members, are not *yet* ascertained.

4. The amount of the legacies acknowledged by the treasurer during these three years, is one hundred and thirty dollars.

IV.

TABULAR VIEW of the contributions to Foreign Missions, of the Societies in Tolland County, from the year 1831 to the year 1851, inclusive, *legacies not included.*

SOCIETIES.	1831.	1832.	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.	1837.	1838.	1839.	1840.	1841.
Andover, - -	$68.83	$33.00	$30.02	$36.50	$63.37	$41.82	$64.50	$ .00	$57.01	$68.00	$102.39
Bolton, - -	62.67	76.54	.00	47.68	43.78	34.25	.00	40.00	.00	.00	29.50
Columbia, - -	44.71	71.71	48.55	56.83	44.81	40.37	24.07	46.66	46.38	106.88	90.94
Coventry First,	70.30	142.77	26.00	97.48	121.18	104.00	124.46	112.41	78.44	93.17	65.27
Coventry North, -	71.00	48.45	153.47	47.63	177.49	111.33	178.50	117.82	73.02	122.58	118.55
Coventry Village Ch.,	organized	January	10, 1849.	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Ellington, - -	124.39	76.09	77.55	80.96	113.13	141.29	181.25	137.08	76.09	131.53	142.13
Gilead, - -	29.22	61.61	58.15	46.81	.00	60.95	52.06	53.76	.00	45.37	48.26
Hebron, - -	41.33	60.85	57.50	56.73	50.02	45.38	98.27	56.70	63.00	53.00	139.51
North Mansfield,	72.28	104.09	127.00	.00	.00	75.20	82.00	.00	50.34	66.00	87.97
Rockville First, -	organized	October	26, 1837.	.00	.00	.00	16.50	.00	201.12	192.97	.00
Rockville Second,	organized	February	22, 1849.	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Somers, - -	135.32	120.52	125.33	135.68	154.00	147.72	212.00	190.63	193.85	173.37	207.44
Stafford East, -	29.00	28.50	30.00	31.34	40.16	33.51	46.00	.00	20.00	44.35	72.10
Stafford West, -	.00	.00	.00	38.23	40.00	20.80	30.25	.00	20.20	43.00	.00
Stafford Springs,	recently	organized	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tolland, - -	89.74	63.70	52.79	55.38	56.68	41.56	76.68	31.78	43.14	39.83	55.71
Union, - -	.00	16.27	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	3.50
Vernon, - -	256.25	117.01	126.30	127.10	148.14	495.65	544.94	584.84	365.93	303.77	360.00
Willington, -	24.16	33.25	26.22	41.33	40.68	40.70	46.11	30.91	.00	40.00	.00
	1,119.20	1,054.36	938.88	899.68	1,093.44	1,434.53	1,777.59	1,402.59	1,288.52	1,523.82	1,523.27

IV. Tabular View.—(Continued.

Societies.	1842.	1843.	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.	1849.	1850.	1851.	Total 21 years.
Andover, - -	$105.00	$100.00	$80.00	$76.00	$60.00	$134.50	$80.04	$74.37	$ .00	$84.70	$1,360.05
Bolton, - -	.00	28.66	33.87	.00	19.27	.00	11.51	.00	28.58	.00	456.31
Columbia, - -	97.48	87.32	84.72	82.37	70.00	78.15	100.04	62.51	81.00	26.86	1,392.36
Coventry First,	111.94	192.20	70.95	213.54	211.77	222.40	41.33	47.00	80.00	87.30	2,313.91
Coventry North, -	139.53	140.72	90.28	95.25	110.39	160.18	98.24	141.79	220.69	162.45	2,579.36
Coventry Village Ch.,	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	63.75	116.00	179.75
Ellington, - -	140.56	101.46	119.21	128.67	101.99	114.72	110.00	84.13	101.65	120.91	2,404.79
Gilead, - -	.00	44.24	51.00	53.06	50.50	49.46	60.00	23.00	51.86	50.22	889.53
Hebron, - -	.00	102.00	81.49	90.00	88.85	82.83	71.49	116.85	93.90	127.26	1,576.96
North Mansfield,	89.87	61.10	57.00	67.66	60.00	50.00	61.00	99.25	61.00	68.00	1,339.76
Rockville First, -	240.25	230.33	194.00	200.00	651.28	432.36	218.54	177.24	205.77	249.50	3,209.86
Rockville Second,	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	200.50	305.00	275.15	780.65
Somers, - -	130.49	77.97	99.50	117.82	132.57	136.58	179.94	120.57	206.86	195.91	3,194.07
Stafford East, -	52.00	42.70	20.00	83.42	91.13	70.43	74.17	54.93	.00	9.00	872.74
Stafford West, -	50.00	.00	.00	26.00	.00	.00	.00	5.00	.00	3.00	276.48
Stafford Springs,	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	6.21	6.21
Tolland, - -	17.46	57.28	78.26	56.93	24.90	53.60	102.92	43.48	93.78	40.00	1,175.60
Union, - -	.00	17.00	15.00	20.12	5.00	16.00	17.00	70.45	17.00	.00	197.34
Vernon, - -	381.97	279.98	560.47	505.94	437.83	584.74	540.78	757.66	627.88	522.27	8,629.45
Willington, -	12.75	.00	30.00	66.60	.00	38.50	37.39	28.12	.00	30.00	566.72
	1,569.30	1,562.96	1,665.75	1,883.38	2,145.48	2,224.45	1,804.39	2,106.85	2,238.72	2,174.74	33,401.90

REMARKS.

1. It is not supposed that this table contains *all* the donations of these societies to Foreign Missions for the time included, nor that perfect accuracy in the statements has been attained. Great pains have been taken to make it as correct as possible.

2. The reason for commencing with 1831, is that in that year the accounts of this auxiliary society came into the hands of the present treasurer, since which time they have been kept on a uniform system with commendable clearness and precision.

3. The sums are taken from the Treasurer's Book. But as the calendar year has been substituted for the fiscal year of the society, the amount for any one year, as stated in the Table, and in the Book, will not be the same.

4. Some of the smaller churches in the list are very feeble, and are aided by the Home Missionary Society.

5. The amount of legacies acknowledged as from Tolland County, during the time of this tabular statement, but not included in it, is $2,245.71. Added to the amount of the contributions as seen in the Table, (33,401.90,) this sum makes the whole amount received from this county in twenty-one years, $35,647.61.

2128 Kellogg

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